

### PLANNING THE PAPER

The Editorial Conference, at which the day's paper is planned.

*Frontispiece*

# MODERN JOURNALISM

## A COMPLETE GUIDE TO THE NEWSPAPER CRAFT

*By*

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WITH FOREWORDS

BY

H. A. GWYNNE

PRESIDENT OF THE INSTITUTE  
OF JOURNALISTS (1929-30)

&

G. W. MITCHELL

PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL  
UNION OF JOURNALISTS



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# FOREWORD

BY

MR. H. A. GWYNNE

*President of the Institute of Journalists (1929-30)*

JOURNALISTS of all schools of thought hold the theory that, like a poet, a journalist is born, not made. There is a certain amount of truth in this theory, but the scope of newspaper activity has been so widened by the march of events and the spread of education that real success in the profession can only be attained by a close study and a clear understanding of its technique. The profession of journalism requires as stern an apprenticeship as that of medicine or the law. It may be true that it is impossible by means of intensive training or strenuous study to give a man a "nose for news" when he has none, yet even in this respect the present work by Mr. C. F. Carr and Mr. F. E. Stevens will help him to develop a sense of appreciation of news value if he follows the excellent advice given.

No book on journalism is likely to pass without severe criticism from men who are critics from the very nature of their profession, accustomed to take nothing at its face value and always obliged to probe far beneath the surface. It is more than likely, therefore, that the talented authors of this book will be assailed in our professional papers for a good many of their recommendations, yet I think every journalist will agree that on the whole they have given a very accurate account of the difficulties of our profession, and have supplied many admirable suggestions and given excellent advice for overcoming them.

I am delighted to see at the head of the symposium of famous journalists the excellent advice proffered by Mr. C. P. Scott, of the *Manchester Guardian*. He insists first of



all that every journalist should respect his profession, and, secondly, that he must regard himself as a trustee for the English language. Imbued with these two principles, no young journalist who aspires to succeed in his profession could go far wrong; indeed, they should be received everywhere as the foundations of journalism.

There have been many handbooks published with the object of teaching the young journalist how to succeed in his profession, but I venture to say that the present work covers more adequately than any other book of its kind all the ramifications of newspaper work. There is present throughout its pages a transparently honest and able attempt to give "aid and comfort" to those who mean to make journalism their life's work.

H. A. GWYNNE

"THE MORNING POST" OFFICES,  
*November, 1930.*

# FOREWORD

BY

MR. W. G. MITCHELL

*President of the National Union of Journalists*

MODERN journalism, as the authors of this admirably compiled and exhaustive survey of the whole field of newspaper enterprise reveal, has an irresistible fascination. For in spite of the transformations that are taking place, calling for even swifter movement, ceaseless vigilance, and greater concentration, the professional journalist loves his calling.

There are, no doubt, other professions where mental activity is more sustained and intense, but for endless variety and contact with the everyday affairs of life, modern journalism has a charm one finds extremely difficult to define.

The newspaper of to-day is much more than a business. Behind every publication, national or provincial, there is a mastery of detail, a high standard of management and enterprise, imagination, and indomitable energy that has given to British journalism a prestige unequalled in any other country in the world.

To the student of modern journalism this is a book to be heartily commended. It covers every phase of life in the newspaper office thoroughly and intimately, and will prove solid ground for training. To the experienced journalist there is also a fund of valuable information. Present-day tendencies emphasize the importance of the journalist having a clear insight into every phase of a highly complex industry. This book gives it.

W. G. MITCHELL



## AUTHORS' PREFACE

THE aim of this book is to present as complete as possible a survey of British journalism, having special regard to the requirements, in the matter of qualification, of those who aspire to make journalism their career.

The first consideration has been to concentrate on the practical aspect of newspaper work, so that the entrant may see the subject whole as well as in its parts. Because the entry is still largely through provincial journalism, the special aspects of the latter as a training-ground have been given due attention, and because also of the opportunities which are now open to journalists in specialized spheres of newspaper administration, these, too, have been explained in some detail.

An effort has been made to keep in proper perspective the limitations and difficulties of a profession which appeals especially to that type of mind which seeks close contact with men and affairs, and which finds in variety and freedom from monotonous routine the stimulation which some other professions do not offer.

An attempt has been made also to indicate the probable lines of the development of journalism, which must in the future offer even wider opportunities to its workers.

The appeal to the mind through the eye has not been neglected, and in this connection the authors offer their thanks to the *News-Chronicle*, the *Daily Express*, the *Daily Mail*, the *Daily Telegraph*, *The Scotsman*, and Southern Newspapers, Limited, for permission to use copyright photographs. The *News-Chronicle* has been especially generous in affording facilities for illustration.

C. F. C.  
F. E. S.



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# MODERN JOURNALISM

## SECTION I INTRODUCTORY

### CHAPTER I A SURVEY OF THE FIELD

THE purpose of this book is to provide for the use of those who would enter journalism as comprehensive a picture as can be given of the range of newspaper interests. The field is vast, closely cultivated, yielding harvests of the most varied kinds, and though it cannot be said that the labourers are few it is certain that they will increase in number, and it is fitting that such as these should enter the field with their eyes open.

And for the reason that this book will deal with journalism in the present and in the future, it is not necessary to be detailed about the journalism of the past, except upon occasion to trace current tendencies to their source in order to gain some idea, if possible, of their future course. The universal habit of newspaper reading which has so greatly widened the field dates from the war, in this country at all events, and the comment is probably true of other lands. Only a proportion of the population previously regarded newspapers as a necessity. They were a luxury, taxed as such at one time, but making no very urgent demand upon the attention of democracy.

#### The Old and the New

Comparisons are sometimes made between the old journalism and the new. There is one respect at least in which the

journalism of the past could challenge comparison with the journalism of to-day. The old hands were soundly trained; their standards are not the standards of the moment, but they were good standards; they often wrote fine resonant English. They laid the foundations of all that stands for fine craftsmanship in the journalism of to-day. We owe them more than has generally been acknowledged.

There are respects in which these old hands were casual. They did not value their profession; they practised an extreme individualism for which—so we think—we have substituted something better. But in a rough and ready way, operating through the law of the survival of the fittest, the best men rose to positions of influence, and used their powers wisely. Youth, in their day, found the doors of the profession not closed to them, but offering no welcome. The doors, indeed, were not easy to find at all, and when found they often had to be forced.

London apart, journalism was often a family matter, and in such cases suitability did not always govern the situation. There are in the provinces to-day, and in London in some degree, journalists who graduated at "the case," and a very sound training they had, as every journalist who had not this additional equipment readily acknowledges. To-day, that door is not exactly closed, but it is less frequently used. In time it will not be used at all except in remote places and for economic reasons.

### Post-war Journalism

Inevitably post-war journalism offers a wider opportunity to youth as a matter of simple arithmetic. Just how newspapers compare in numbers with the total of forty years ago it does not concern us to estimate, for the reason that the figure would differ next year, but it is a fact admitting of no dispute that increased newspaper production is one of the big industries of this country employing more and

more millions of capital ; absorbing more and more thousands of workers of all grades. In consequence the doors are open wider to the youth with an itch to write than ever they were.

It is a major purpose of this book to make the profession of journalism understandable to the aspirant, who, entering it in his youth, anticipates spending the rest of his working life within it. How should he proceed in his search for the appropriate door, and, having found it, in what way can it be made to open to his knock?

### **An Open Profession**

Journalism is an open profession, and such in all probability it must and will remain. And the reason for this is that the standards are not constant. It would be impossible, and ridiculous as well, to attempt to exclude any person having the necessary qualifications because he had not entered by a door of specified design. The profession is one which cannot be compared with any other. The learned professions may have men within their ranks without vocation but able successfully to submit themselves to the necessary arbitrary tests. The journalist must have vocation.

It is agreed—the opinion is held almost universally—that the best entrance to the profession of journalism is through the doorway of the provincial newspaper. That is not to say that there is no other way. Countless journalists have served their undergraduate course in journalism in London. These have been the fortunate ones. Perhaps their gifts were outstanding ; perhaps they found, by good fortune or with assistance, a door which opened widely enough to admit them as raw material. We have called them fortunate, but it is a relative matter. Such as these, spared a measure of drudgery as they may have been, could not have been so well-trained as their brethren graduating—as the bulk have to do—upon provincial papers.

## CHAPTER II

### EDUCATION AND JOURNALISM

THERE has been a considerable change in the attitude towards education during the past quarter of a century. The change really commenced before that, but it is during the period stated that it has been most marked and has had most effect. One of its chief features has been the gradual making of a new and more intimate point of contact between school education and the ordinary workaday business life. It has been realized more and more that the purpose of school education should not only be to give the pupil a sound foundation upon which to build the superstructure of after-school education, but that also—in its later stages, at all events—it should be arranged to give some degree of specialized preparation for the occupation chosen by the individual pupil.

Occupations are chosen less haphazardly to-day. They will be chosen even less so in the future. The science of applied psychology has provided some remarkably accurate methods of assessing individual aptitudes which are not only of great assistance to parents, but are often a useful stimulation to the personal inclinations of the pupil. In this direction further developments may be expected.

#### Entry by Examination ?

The question of education as it affects the training of the young journalist for his career has often given rise to discussion, both by individual journalists who have a keen interest in the efficiency and the dignity of the craft and by the professional organizations whose interest in the matter has been concentrated on more official lines. The general standard of education amongst professional journalists has

often been critically analysed, and on more than one occasion it has been suggested that there should be an educational entry to journalism similar to that necessary in such professions as law and accountancy.

In brief, this suggestion is that there should be entry strictly by examination, with preliminary, intermediate, and final stages as in the professions mentioned. This, say those who have voiced the idea, would give journalism the dignity and security of an established profession and raise its status accordingly. Whilst it is a question not without interest, as showing a certain trend of opinion, it is not our purpose further to discuss it here. It is mentioned simply because there may lie in it a germ of future development.

The educational qualifications necessary for efficiency in any profession are obviously dependent upon the demand which the particular circumstances and requirements of the occupation make upon the mental equipment, the personal skill, and the temperamental adaptability of the person who has chosen to follow it. In discussing the educational equipment of the young journalist, therefore, we must examine with some care the demands which journalism makes on the journalist.

### **The Necessary and the Expedient**

Journalism cannot be fundamentally analysed so easily or so clearly as some other professions. One might say quite safely, for instance, that an architect would be severely cramped without a sound knowledge of trigonometry and a clear understanding of the principles of drawing accurately to scale, or that a constructional engineer could scarcely succeed if he were completely ignorant of the theory of stresses and strains. Yet one would hesitate to say that a journalist would be a woeful failure without a minute knowledge of history and a complete understanding of the evolution of political ideas.

In journalism not so many things are necessary as expedient. In it—as in every other profession—there is no royal road to success, but—unlike many other professions—it has a good many pathways which sometimes provide a short cut and lead, at least, to a reasonable competence. It is a profession, too, in which the standards or degrees of success—as measured by personal attainment and influence—are considerably more numerous than in many other walks of life.

The editor of a flourishing provincial weekly, for instance, may be far removed in emoluments and influence from the editor of *The Times* or of any of the other big daily newspapers, but he has his own special niche in the journalistic gallery, and has reached the top of one of the numerous journalistic ladders. He has his own responsibilities, too, and they make a specialized demand upon his professional knowledge and capabilities.

### Present-day Examples

Nothing is quite so conclusive as the lessons to be learned from personal achievement. It has been amply proved time and again that high educational attainments are not essential for success in newspaper work. Many of our most successful British journalists, men occupying the editorial chairs of some of our leading newspapers, are men who started in the profession with a minimum of educational advantages.

This, one might be told, applies also to other professions, but it is more true of journalism than of most of them. It would not be safe to assume that journalism is the profession which offers the surest way to success for the brainy boy whose early training has been handicapped by a limited parental purse. It would, however, be true, we think, to say that not many other professions are so easy of entry to such a lad or offer so many opportunities of showing his worth, providing he has that peculiar *flair* which journalism demands.

Before this aspect of journalism and education is dismissed, it would have been inadequately treated were it not mentioned that journalism is attracting many more young men from the universities. This may be considered, in the first place, to be due largely to the increased attractiveness of the profession as a means of earning a reasonable livelihood. The economic status of the journalist has greatly improved since the war. Prior to 1914 many reporters and sub-editors on the staffs of daily papers of national circulation were earning not more than £5 a week. To-day nearly double that sum is the minimum wage of a reporter on the same class of paper. In the provinces wages, too, were very low having regard to the economic condition of the newspaper industry.

### Economic Position Improved

The conditions of employment and of remuneration have improved tremendously, so much so that they are often a source of wonderment to veteran journalists of the old school. The plain truth is that the newspaper industry has gradually become highly commercialized. The commercialization process is practically complete, and it is now being followed by the rationalization process. The modern newspaper office is as highly organized, both for efficiency and economy, as a modern chocolate factory. You may look for Bohemia in it, but you are more likely to find Business. Old journalists sometimes regret the change. The young ones are quite satisfied, for they have known no other conditions. It is extremely probable that they would not be dissatisfied if they had.

This raising of the economic status of the journalist—which, by the way, was long overdue—has given the pen a new magnetic influence as an instrument for earning a steady living. Journalism has become more attractive as a profession because its rewards are greater than ever before,



and at the same time the peculiar fascinations of the calling have in no way diminished. It is not surprising, therefore, that a good many recruits are coming into it from the universities. At the same time, it must be recognized that the proportion relatively is still low, and that the chances in journalism for the youth of average education are by no means limited.

### A Reasonable Standard

For the youth who is commencing his training in a newspaper office straight from school the standard of education represented by matriculation, or the Oxford and Cambridge Locals, may be taken as a reasonably efficient one, although a big percentage of working journalists are able to get along quite well with even less. But it is obvious that the general standards of education in the country are steadily rising, and that correspondingly the educational demands in every profession are also rising.

It has already been suggested that it is not easy to define any hard and fast standards as far as journalism is concerned. When a man achieves outstanding success in any walk of life without effort which is apparently strained it is a common expression to say that he was "born" to it. Many successful newspaper men have been described as "born journalists."

It is an open question whether facile success in any sphere is not rather a matter of mental agility and adaptability than of mental equipment cast in one particular mould. It is, at all events, true to say that mental agility and adaptability count for more in newspaper work than most other qualities. Of them, at least, it may be said that they are essentials. Journalism, in nearly all its phases, calls for close observation, quick perception, and a ready and accurate appraisement of the significance of events and the trends of opinion. It is on these lines that the education of the young

journalist is best moulded, and it is to this end that it is most usefully planned.

### University Preparation

It is only of very recent years that anything has been done in this country to place education for the profession of journalism on a footing similar to that which obtains for other callings. As far back as 1908 the late Professor Churton Collins was advocating university courses specially planned for journalism, and drew up a specimen course. In America many of the universities pay the same attention to journalism as they do to the other responsible professions in the provision of special courses, and the American newspapers are thus able to fill junior vacancies with recruits who already have a useful insight into newspaper work and can handle efficiently a variety of assignments.

In this connection the work of the University of Missouri, initiated by Dean Williams, is of special interest. The journalism classes at this university are outstandingly practical, and have been very successful over a considerable period of years. The students produce their own daily newspapers, and are thus able to do the routine and specialist work of a newspaper office under normal conditions. There is nothing quite like it anywhere else.

In England excellent work on somewhat similar lines is being done at the University of London, where the journalism course is spread over two years. These courses, which are becoming increasingly useful, were begun in 1919, and were primarily designed for ex-Service men who had been engaged in journalism before the war, or who intended to take up journalism as a career. The number of students has been steadily increasing, both sexes being represented. As a matter of fact, in some years the women students have outnumbered the men. That the courses have made a wide appeal is proved by the fact that in addition to the English

students, others have come from Canada, South Africa, India, Egypt, Mauritius, Ceylon, America, Denmark, Holland, China, Russia, Italy, France, and other countries.

The average age of students taking the courses is from 18 to 21, and through the generous interest of newspaper proprietors and others the University is able to offer exhibitions for journalism to young men who show an aptitude for the profession. The courses extend normally over two consecutive academic years, and the main aim is to give a sound intellectual training which is calculated to promote professional efficiency. First year students do not work to a syllabus. The lecture courses provided are largely compulsory, but in some cases, with the consent of the tutor, students may take other courses provided by the college in substitution for those incorporated in the syllabus, and these courses are approved courses for the examination.

### London University Courses

The courses are as follows—

SECTION I. To be taken by all students: (1) English Composition; (2) Practical Journalism.

SECTION II. *One* subject to be chosen: (1) History of Political Ideas; (2) Principles of Criticism; (3) General History and Development of Science.

SECTION III. *Two* subjects to be chosen: (1) English Literature; (2) History; (3) Modern Languages (French, German, Spanish, Italian, Russian, and Dutch); (4) Political Science; (5) Economics; (6) Philosophy and Psychology.

The lecture courses are comprehensive, and that in practical journalism is one of great utility to the journalistic beginner. A recent syllabus shows that the subjects include the following: "News Collecting and Writing"; "The Function of the Sub-editor"; "Work for Magazines and Periodicals, and Literary and Magazine Pages of Newspapers";

"The Sub-editor at Work"; "Headline Construction"; "The Labour Correspondent"; "Dramatic Journalism"; "More about Sub-editing"; "Specialization"; "The Evolution of the British Newspaper Press"; "Organization of the Newspaper Office"; "General Reporting: The Field Work"; "Reporting in the Courts"; "Typography"; and "The Work of the Sports Reporter." The lectures which come under these headings last for an hour, and a second hour is devoted to practical work connected with the subject of the lecture.

### Practical Work

An interesting feature of the courses at the University of London is the production by the students of their own newspaper—the *L.U.J.S. Gazette*—which provides opportunities for practical work of the kind the students will be called upon to do as soon as they enter a newspaper office. Publication dates are definitely fixed, and advance contributions invited. Students who wish to do special work, such as theatrical or film criticism, are allowed to do so.

The second year students are instructed to attend at King's College at a stated time, prepared with notebooks and pencils, to devote themselves to all sorts of journalistic services inside and outside the College. The tasks they are assigned include sub-editing, reporting, interviewing, writing of leaderettes and specials, and précis writing. Volunteers are also invited for proof-reading, and for the making-up of the *Gazette*. Practical reporting work at the Law Courts is also arranged for. It will thus be seen that the University of London courses have been prepared on lines which guarantee real practical value to the student.

### Other Courses

Other courses of lectures are available at the London Polytechnic, and also at the Hall of the Institute of Journalists

at 2 Tudor Street. The London Polytechnic courses include lectures by practical journalists on most aspects of newspaper practice. The Institute lectures, which are announced through the medium of the Institute journal and also in the newspaper trade press, including the *Newspaper World* and the *World's Press News*, are given by journalists of high standard in the profession, and in so far as they reflect modern journalistic thought and practice are on a plane of their own. They are not open to the public, but *bona fide* students who wish to attend them can generally do so by applying to the Secretary of the Institute.

In the provinces no facilities have been provided so far by universities or university colleges for journalistic education. In some places university colleges have arranged from time to time special courses on general educational lines for local journalists, but so far journalism in this country has not become a subject of highly academic interest.

### Self-help

But it must be recognized that not every journalistic aspirant can take advantage of such university facilities, excellent though they may be. A large number of acceptable recruits come into the profession straight from the secondary schools and the grammar schools, and the young journalist often finds it necessary to "complete" his education during the early years of his professional training.

With whatever educational equipment the learner may enter a newspaper office, he will quickly find that his Press training is very largely a process of self-help. Editorial offices are very busy places, and it is only at very infrequent intervals that any member of the staff finds himself without a job of work to do. It is inevitable that the beginner should largely be left to his own devices. He will find that for the first few weeks he will have to discover his own precepts and examples by the simple, and often not very enlightening,

process of being sent out with junior members of the reporting staff who are making "calls."

At this stage of his training there are two things the young reporter must realize above all else: Firstly, to keep his eyes wide open; and, secondly, to use his tongue. He must observe closely and carefully and ask questions incessantly. These two points are not only important in connection with professional training; they are also of the greatest value in relation to education. That is why they are stressed in this chapter. They are indispensable aids to efficiency and success throughout a journalistic career. Thus it is important to cultivate them as early as possible.

### The Essentials

In the first three or four years of his newspaper training, the young journalist should aim to make his self-education conform to the special needs of his calling. Dealing with essentials, one must place first of all an innate appreciation of good English and the ability to write it. The English of the journalist has had its little failings, and it was not entirely without justification that the word "journalese" was coined. Newspaper English became ponderously stereotyped during the Victorian and Edwardian periods, in which a traditional phraseology was built up at the same time as a traditional treatment of events and presentation of news was evolved. In the days when column leaders and three-column reports of political meetings were a common feature of the most popular daily newspapers, the people who found themselves in print could not help speaking and acting in a most stilted and official manner. The firemen could no more help "energetically working to prevent the spread of the devouring element" than the police constable could prevent himself "proceeding to make assiduous inquiries in the vicinity of the unfortunate occurrence." In fact in some country districts his performance of daily duty is still so recorded.

But it is apparent that "journalese" is gradually dying, and is being replaced by a saner, brighter, and more natural English. Modern news writing is much lighter and more colourful than the old style, and even the most conservative of the old country weeklies are showing signs of the change.

### Newspaper English

Good newspaper English to-day is simple, direct, and incisive. Clarity has taken the place of circumlocution. The cliché has given place to the unaffected phrase. In all his news writing the young reporter should make sure that the meaning of everything he writes is crystal clear. There must be no ambiguity, even in the briefest paragraph. Indeed, if he looks after the paragraphs, the columns will take care of themselves.

Absolute clarity is the first essential. He should never use a word of Latin or foreign origin if there is one with an honest Anglo-Saxon root which gives the same meaning. This way lies the direct road to an easily understandable and forceful style.

This ability to write good English can be cultivated, and the young journalist should concentrate carefully upon its acquisition. It is not a matter simply of acquiring a characteristically journalistic phraseology. Merely to express ideas in the way that other newspaper writers have expressed them is slavish imitation which quickly kills individuality. To-day individuality is coming into its own in news writing, and the quicker the beginner realizes this fact, and strives to give rein to his own personality, the better the augury for his success.

Modern newspapers have found a place for the writer who has a piquantly individual style. They have done so because they have discovered that readers like the individual note in journalism, and that the personal "pull" of a team of such writers is of definite value in raising circulation.

### Watch the Experts

In the early stages of his training, which, as has already been hinted, will probably be largely self-training, the young newspaper man should take every opportunity to compare the work of front-rank journalists who have "covered" the same event. The best opportunities are provided by events of outstanding national importance. On such occasions the London daily newspapers generally feature the signed work of a star member of their staffs. Each news article of this description should be carefully studied and analysed.

It will be found that each writer, acting as a descriptive recorder for his own special circle of readers, has taken an individual viewpoint from which to review the occasion. A comparison of the best work in this way is of the greatest value in revealing to the beginner the secrets of journalistic technique. There is no other profession in which it is possible for the learner, at the cost of only a few pence, to gain such valuable insight into the methods of the masters of the craft.

### Value of Shorthand

Dealing still with essentials, it is necessary to stress the indispensability to the journalist of a practical knowledge of shorthand. Of recent years there has been a tendency for an impression to arise that shorthand has lost its value to the newspaper man. It is true that in most modern newspaper offices the briefly and brightly-written *précis* has taken the place of the verbatim report, except on occasions when leaders of political parties or other men of outstanding importance make speeches or statements of vital interest to the nation.

The ability to take a verbatim note is undoubtedly not so necessary as it was a few years ago when long first-person reports were common. At the same time, it is unwise for the young journalist to assume that he can rub along quite well



without shorthand, which is of daily usefulness to a newspaper man in whatever special sphere of journalistic activity he may be engaged. In almost every assignment he is sent to cover the need will arise for taking notes of some kind. These notes will probably not be used in their entirety in his report, but they are indispensable in providing the material on which he will base it.

Even in work apart from ordinary reporting, such as the writing of leaders, special articles, book reviews, and other work of a more or less literary nature, shorthand has a distinctly useful place. By its aid rough drafts can be quickly prepared, and in work which requires a considerable amount of research, and the making of extracts from numerous books in reference libraries, it provides a short cut which not only saves time, but lightens labour tremendously.

There are, no doubt, a good many journalists to-day who make shift without shorthand, but their example, even in these days of brevity, cannot be recommended. In any profession the practical course is to equip oneself for personal efficiency, and without shorthand the journalist is minus one of his most useful tools. In this connection it may be mentioned that Pitman's Shorthand is well maintaining its popularity with Pressmen. It has served newspaper men for two generations, and they look upon it as a servant which has served them faithfully and well.

### Typewriting Indispensable

In the modern newspaper office the typewriter has overflowed from the commercial department, in which it had previously reigned supreme, into practically every other department. Up to a few years ago there was a considerable prejudice against it in reporters' rooms, but this was quickly broken down by a few pioneers who discovered that they could save themselves a good deal of hard work by using one of these handy machines.

Nowadays a very large percentage of journalists have acquired the typewriter habit, and in many offices a typewriter is provided for every member of the staff. The young journalist, therefore, should learn to operate a typewriter as soon as possible, and provide himself with a machine. The portable typewriters which have come on the market within recent years are immensely popular with Pressmen. They stand up well to the wear they receive in newspaper work, and are undoubtedly a good investment.

### Don't Neglect Handwriting

Care should be taken to cultivate a clear and legible style of handwriting. Whilst it is true that a large proportion of news-writing is done on the typewriter, it is unwise to allow this fact to lead to the development of poor handwriting. Patience and practice will work wonders with bad script, and will eventually eradicate bad habits with the pen. A good round hand, in which the letters are clearly formed, is the best.

It is an elementary requirement in the newspaper office that all news copy shall be easily read, firstly, to save time in sub-editing and in setting by the lino operators; and, secondly, to prevent the possibility of errors. It is remarkable what harm can be wrought by even a small error in a newspaper report. A single wrong word, or the mis-spelling of a name, has often cost newspapers hundreds of pounds. In most offices reporters and correspondents are required to write all names in block letters.

But if reasonably good handwriting is necessary to the reporter, a clear style is absolutely essential to the sub-editor, who is called upon to make clear what other people have left in doubt, and to write in numerous alterations on almost every slip of copy with which he deals. A sub-editor who writes illegibly is not only a nuisance to the news composing department but a positive danger to the newspaper which employs him.

### General Knowledge

The education of a journalist requires, as its basis, a sound foundation of general knowledge and common sense. He is first of all the guardian of the reputation of his newspaper, and he has a responsibility which is far above simply taking for granted every statement which is made to him and which he is called upon to report. He is largely a corrector of the mistakes in matters of fact and the accidental slips in matters of taste and propriety of his fellow-men. All the copy he writes must pass the test of his own good sense, and he should pass nothing through to the sub-editors, except under circumstances of great stress, until he has read it carefully through and is sure of its accuracy. Even the best-known public men and women are liable to error.

As far as is possible, dates, quotations, and historical allusions should be verified, and too much care cannot be taken to ensure accuracy in what may appear to be matters of small detail. An observant eye and a questioning mind are a journalist's greatest assets, and they should be used just as much to prevent perpetuation of the errors of other people as to ensure the personal accuracy of his work. It is true that to a very large extent the sub-editor's room stands as a bulwark between the reporter and the unforgiving record of the printed page, but the fact that a sub-editor unwittingly passes an error does not excuse the fact that the reporter committed it to paper in the first place. "Every reporter his own sub-editor" is a golden rule for the young journalist to bear in mind. The personal care in the preparation of copy which it teaches is not only a sure safeguard against serious error but an invaluable preparation for actual sub-editorial responsibility and for higher executive duties.

### Languages Useful

A knowledge of one or more European languages is decidedly useful. French may be given the place of first

importance, and should be chosen if it is intended to concentrate on one language. Through the medium of French newspapers and magazines it is possible to keep intimately in touch with Continental thought and culture, and the language is also of the greatest help if the work of the journalist should take him abroad. Indeed, an acquaintance with it is often the reason for the selection of a journalist for work entailing a Continental tour.

Next to French, German is probably the best choice, with Spanish as an increasingly useful alternative. In any case, if the interest in languages of the journalistic student is not strong, and does not carry him further than a nodding acquaintance with them, he should at least acquire the elements of their structure, know the national forms of address, and the names of Government institutions and national newspapers.

Many years may have to pass before the world becomes internationally-minded in regard to the question of language, but the use of the language has become sufficiently widespread, and the evidence in its favour is sufficiently strong to justify a recommendation of a knowledge of Esperanto, not only for the pleasant mental stimulus of its acquisition, but also because of its aid to foreign inquiry, particularly in the more obscure countries where ordinary facilities are not so easily obtainable.

### Historical Standpoints

History should be studied from the standpoint of the origin and development of political ideas and national and social movements rather than from the standpoint of purely historical detail. Although no period should be deliberately neglected, it can be taken for granted in a general way that so far as political evolution and social development in this country are concerned things did not begin to happen in an important way until the seventeenth century, and from

thence onward there is plenty to occupy and to interest the student of history, of whatever professional bent he may be.

To the journalist history has three aspects which are more important than the others: political, industrial, and sociological, and they should absorb most of his attention in this sphere of study. Sociology has become an essential part of politics to-day, and nearly all modern industrial legislation is based on an instinct for social betterment, so that this aspect of historical study has a special importance.

The study of personality, too, is not unimportant in its historical relationships, particularly in the effect great men and women of all times have had in shaping the destinies of nations. Modern European history claims careful attention—especially the territorial and political changes brought about by the Great War—because of the increasing importance of international relationships, the effects of which often assume the importance of big “news.”

Great Britain is not so insular as she used to be, and the fusion of her news interests with those of the countries on the other side of the English Channel and the North Sea, which is gradually taking place, makes it necessary that there should be not only some understanding of the problems which are now common to many nations but that there should be some acquaintance with those outstanding personages in all countries who are attempting to solve them. A large proportion of national questions to-day have an international aspect, and it is just as important that this should be understood as the purely domestic application.

### “Applied Topicality”

Modern journalism might be truthfully described as “applied topicality,” and it is an elementary duty of the journalist to keep himself well informed on those matters which are generally described as “questions of the day.” Sometimes a new topic comes into the news for the first

time in an unobtrusive way and within a few days is claiming almost universal attention. After a time it may completely lose its interest; on the other hand, like broadcasting, for instance, its continued appeal may demand a permanent place in the attention of the people who make newspapers.

Whilst it is not possible to master every subject which comes into the news with the thoroughness of the specialist, it is necessary that acquaintance should be made with its elementals, and that the journalist should know sufficient of them not to make, when writing of them, foolish mistakes which let down both himself and his newspaper.

Subjects which have a pronounced technical bias—wireless, motoring, and aviation may be cited as three of them—present many pitfalls to the newspaper writer, and many errors can be avoided by a little careful reading of manuals which deal with them.

### Knowing Where to Look

One of the first things a young journalist has to learn is how to use reference books and similar sources of information. He has to learn to look not only in the more obvious directions for guidance on points of everyday perplexity, but he must learn to appreciate also the value of out-of-the-way sources of reference—that while the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, *Who's Who*, and *Whitaker's Almanack* have their plain uses, the catalogue of a gramophone company is often the quickest means of checking the spelling of the names of modern composers or of an excerpt from one of the lesser-known operas, and that the *London Telephone Directory* is not only a fairly safe guide to the names of everyone of importance in London, and to its street names also, but that in addition it contains the full designation of practically every company and public organization of any importance in Great Britain. Catalogues and similar commercial compilations often have considerable value as reference books,

and frequently give information which cannot be found elsewhere.

By making himself familiar with sources of this kind which are available when needed, the young journalist is able to create in his mind a useful sense of location in the search for information which he is often called upon to make. The mind of the journalist need not be overburdened with facts so long as he knows where to obtain them when they are required. A sound knowledge of the highways and byways of the reference library is indispensable.

### Schools of Journalism

These are a feature of journalistic training which has greatly developed during the last ten years, and it may be presumed that some of them at least have, on economic grounds, justified themselves.

The efficient schools must, on the law of averages, have increased the earning capacity of some of their pupils, just as it has inevitably happened that many young men and women have spent money which, possibly, they could not afford in obtaining training which could never be of much value to them. Money is being wasted all round us and every day, in most of the professions and all the arts, in training unsuitable material.

It remains true, whatever the schools of journalism may claim, that there is no training like the school of practical journalism which exists on every properly-organized newspaper, especially if the pupil finds among his seniors, as he happily will in most cases, somebody who is sufficiently interested in the young entry to guide his faltering footsteps through the bewilderments of the early days.

Even if he is left to find his way alone, as a great many youngsters have to do, the pupil learning his trade where everything is realistic must make a more practical job of it than in an artificial atmosphere, such as must exist in any school.

To decry schools of journalism, in general, would be to shut one's eyes to the obvious truth that an experienced journalist in charge of such would be able to impart his knowledge within its walls to those sitting at his feet. Moreover, the suggestion that schools create a supply which can never in practice be absorbed is beside the point. The law of the survival of the fittest, harsh as it is, must apply.

### Not a Closed Profession

Were it possible, as it is not, to make journalism a closed profession, there would be the fullest justification for reputable schools in the preparation of students for such entrance examinations as were framed. Every closed profession is so equipped, and no stone is ever cast at those who legitimately and honourably meet this demand, whether it is done in the institutional sense or on a commercial basis. The point is not worth stressing as things exist, nor is there any prospect of change in this respect.

Seeing that the subject of this chapter is the profession of journalism as it is, it might be argued that the challenge to the young journalist is the modern habit of making "names" *qua* "names" the touchstone; but the truth in that matter is that no amount of argument of a philosophical kind will change a standard of values which is admittedly unsound, but to which there is a public response.

People seem to prefer the views of the people whose names they know rather than those of the anonymous person who must become a trained investigator of facts; who will quickly acquire the habit of unimpassioned presentation, and editors, aware of the fact, take such steps as seem good to them to meet the demand. This modern tendency, which is not to be defended, is really not so important as it seems.



## CHAPTER III

### HOW TO ENTER JOURNALISM

IN the matter of entry there is no settled practice, nor is there any likelihood that a common form will grow up. Perhaps it is desirable that the way in should not be made too "strait," lest the best material might not be available. But it is a fact beyond gainsaying that the general educational and intellectual qualification of the young entry is higher than ever it was. The time has not come, and we hope it never will, when a man or woman possessed of a degree will regard it as a means of forcing an entry in the absence of any sense of vocation.

Newspaper offices, large and small, are commercial institutions. They serve the public, and as a mere matter of economics they must equip themselves in the matter of personnel with the best available brains. The source from which provincial newspapers—dealing exclusively with them for the moment—draw their junior staff is large, for the reason that the profession of journalism exercises a glamour for youth exceeding almost any other. It is surprising, but the truth, that the general public know very little about the profession, although, to a degree which applies to no other, its members work in the limelight.

#### Plenty of Talent Available

Hence it is that the provincial editor has the advantage that he need not take an inferior type, because the best in his area is often ready to his hand. It may be that he often chooses young men who, in spite of superficial appearance, turn out to be misfits. But he can, if he has the wits, pick out the good ones.

Young men in their late teens, who have passed the

Matriculation Examination of London University, or an examination of like value, are admirable material, given that they have, as far as it is possible to judge, some flair for writing, the instinct ingrained to work hard, and a sense of their own supreme unimportance in the general economy of newspaperdom. This last point matters exceedingly, but it would be useless to enlarge upon it. The lessons to be learnt under this head cannot be taught from a book.

It is not a good thing, on the whole, that there is this looseness in the matter of entry, but it works out tolerably well. We have known offices in which pupils have paid premiums, or had them paid on their behalf, working alongside youths who have secured entry without such aids, and in the same office there may be youths, still picking up that education which determination and enthusiasm can give, who have graduated from commercial life because it seemed that they had gifts. There are all sorts and conditions of young men among the juniors, and their ways of beginning are as varied as their attainments.

### No Change in Thirty Years

These conditions have not changed substantially in the last thirty years. We have known young men to enter an office under a three years' apprenticeship deed, and to have as their colleagues among the cubs, as they call them in the United States, youngsters who have signed nothing, and for that reason were better paid.

There is one small difference nowadays, as compared with those more peaceful times, that in theory, at least, there is to-day a limitation in the matter of juniors. Then there were as many as the editor would put up with; now, under an agreement with the National Union of Journalists, the proportion of seniors to juniors has been fixed.

That is not to say that this proportion is always observed. There are many newspapers controlled by men of high skill

which, for a dozen reasons, own no allegiance to the bodies which made this agreement, and it is no less true that a very fine training is often available upon their staffs, because their editors are men of imagination, have the capacity to impart knowledge as they go along—not a common gift—and are not afraid to take a bit of trouble to turn out their young men at the end of the period of pupilage as well-equipped as they can manage.

It is impossible to make any analysis as to the proportion of offices—in the provinces—in which the apprenticeship or pupilage systems obtain and those in which recruitment is a hand-to-mouth affair. Nor is there the material upon which to assess the effectiveness of either method. Journalism is too individual a profession to permit the laying down of a general mould into which the young entry can be poured for its fashioning.

### The Free-lance Entry

And that is why there is still a considerable measure of recruitment into journalism from among those who, rather later in life than the pupil stage, have found their *métier* and the opportunity to develop it. There are no rules here either. All sorts and conditions of men, natural journalists, have tried and been tried by other professions; have used spare time to write about the things of which they had knowledge; have knocked at the door of newspaper opportunity, and have been admitted because they have been able to give practical proof that they can do what is required of them in an exacting profession.

There are still, as always, men who have thrown up their steady jobs in a hare-brained adventure to achieve something in journalism in London without better equipment than a supreme faith in their powers of endurance, the knack of ready writing, some measure of adaptability, and a determination to force an entry somehow. The late Mr.

T. P. O'Connor did it—though he had had some preliminary training—and countless others who later achieved mastery of their craft. That door simply cannot be closed, and on the whole it would not be for the good of the profession if it could.

## CHAPTER IV THE JOURNALISTIC TEMPERAMENT

Just what qualifications of temperament are required to achieve success in journalism? There is no short answer to the question. You will often hear it said that "So-and-So" is a born journalist, but, generally speaking, that phrase means nothing at all. A man may be born with a questing spirit, and, given certain other qualities, become a good reporter; another man may be born with the figure sense, and might, but for chance, have become a chartered accountant. Instead, he finds out that he can write, and another chance, it may be, turns him into a city editor.

Yet another discovers he can write fluently; he is the kind of man who might become a good journalist when he has purged his soul of the desire to write for writing's sake. But that kind of man needs to have other and very definite qualities if he is to learn anything from the pruning which other people apply to his work and become a journalist in spite of being able to write with ease.

His case is very like the man who, because he has "the gift of the gab," aspires to rule. It is not the right qualification at all. A politician may, when he has learned a great deal about administration, become a ruler, indeed, but not because he has the tongue of a ready speaker. If he succeeds, it will oftentimes be in spite of it.

Let us get down from this generality to a particular instance. There is a famous journalist who, from being a reporter, became in time—and, he will admit, with luck—a news editor. He agrees quite cheerfully that he was a failure. He had a shot at all sorts of jobs, organizing, administrative, and the rest, all having to do with the handling and the presentation of news, but came to the conclusion at long

last, that his *métier* was pure reporting. And late in middle life he returned to it again, won a place of real distinction in that field, and is supremely happy at it.

### Striking Sparks

Could it be said that that man was a born journalist? Not necessarily. But it would be true to say that he is one of many who respond to the stimulation of close contacts with his fellows. The sparks which he struck from life aided him to put life into his writing.

But reduced to its essence, it meant no more than that he was happier in watching the passing show at close quarters than in dealing with its distilled essence. He wanted to see things for himself, and was not content—as many are—to see through the eyes of others. It is, of course, a commonplace that the truly happy man is the man who is doing the job he likes best. And it is no less true that only a few men have the courage to make the kind of choice that that man made.

Is there such a man as a born sub-editor? No. Are news editors born and not made? Again the answer must be in the negative.

If you carry the inquiry a stage further and ask the question: Is there such a thing as a born editor? you see the thing in all its absurdity. A very good editor may have some of the qualities which make for full success in his job, but there are many editorial jobs in which such a man would fail to realize all his opportunities.

### Ill-defined

It boils down to this: that the term journalist is much too ill-defined, and one of the special needs of the profession is that it should be defined with greater precision, not as a means of restricting entry, but in order that there should be less looseness in its application.

The man in the street doesn't know what he means exactly when he applies the description, and there are many men of great eminence and the highest gifts in newspaper production to whom, in strictness, the description does not apply at all. And yet the man in the street always calls these men journalists.

It is obviously true, too, that there are many journalists, using the word in strict regard to its derivation, who have never practised writing for the journals at all, because they couldn't find the way in through a door, which is, in truth, wide enough, but which is admittedly difficult to locate. Would you call Pepys a journalist in the true sense? Yes. Creevy? Yes. Greville? Yes.

All these men did in fact, though not in newspapers, make a record of the passing show. They all had the nose for news *par excellence*. They were more truly journalists than . . . No, we will mention no names. Moreover, the newer name for such as practise the calling of journalism as a sort of sideline is publicist. Those who apply such an indefinite term to themselves may be presumed to know what they mean by it. There are many people who have tried to arrive at an understanding and have failed.

### Necessary Qualities

What then are the qualities necessary to salvation in a profession in which the race is to the swift and the resourceful? First, we would place adaptability; for one reason, because it is so difficult to learn.

A man is or is not adaptable, and must, if he would alter his reaction to circumstances so that it becomes rapid and effective, take much thought. Within the profession there are many sound men who, within the limits of their specialism, are rigid, and it may happen that their specialism is the better because their efforts are, as it were, canalized.

But, speaking generally—specialization is a subject

which will be treated later—the journalist is the better equipped in an all-round sense if he has, or can acquire, a measure of adaptability. This sounds a commonplace, because it is, of course, true of any individual that his usefulness depends upon the possession of this quality, but it really is a necessity to the man who has a share in presenting a picture of an everchanging world to a people whose values are not stable either.

It is assumed that the power of observation is a necessary quality also, but there is need of definition here. The mere power of absorbing the detail of a passing scene is of small value without the faculty of relating the detail to the whole.

The reporter must have the capacity to absorb swiftly all the facts of a situation, whether presented to his eye or his mind, but with it there must be the habit (if it is not a gift) of maintaining proportion, or the faculty of observation becomes the end, and not the means to an end. In other words, the man who thinks that observation is all-important is in constant danger of never seeing the wood for the trees.

### How it is Done

Let the point be illustrated a little crudely. It is the common belief of the public that street happenings of the exciting sort are always observed by some miracle by a reporter. How otherwise, the argument runs, can the details be so photographic?

The truth, of course, is that only the golden chance enables the reporter to see the exciting side of a big fire, a street accident, a bank robbery, and photographs are quite commonly posed afterwards. But it could happen—and very occasionally does—that a reporter is actually on the spot when, say, a serious accident happens. He might, if he is very young, return to his news editor with a story which would be graphic in its detail, but which omitted to



give the names and addresses of the victims. He wouldn't do it more than once, of course, but he might easily fail to relate mere observation to the other necessity in his cubhood. No observation could supply names and addresses, the vital part of the news.

They have to be got somehow, as well as all the material facts observable. We have said that the illustration is elementary, but it will be the common experience of everybody who has handled news material that the salient facts are often omitted by the inexperienced for no other reason than that they did not come under the eyes of the writer of the story as a matter of strictly observing what happened.

## SECTION II

### NEWSPAPER PERSONNEL

#### CHAPTER V

#### THE JUNIOR REPORTER

LIKE all the descriptive names in the newspaper hierarchy, this needs definition in the light of modern practice. It does not mean the same thing as it did twenty or thirty years ago, when the efficient and productive middle-aged journalist of to-day was cutting his wisdom teeth in all sorts of ways—orthodox and otherwise.

What is the essential difference between the junior in the last generation and this? In all probability, the only difference is that the junior of to-day has a better general equipment; is, in the truer sense, a man of the world. But the impression persists that while the percentage of brilliant performers is higher, the ranks of the juniors will thin out more rapidly. Juniors of the last generation had a greater "stickitiveness" in their composition; they didn't bother over much (or enough) about their dignity, but they got ahead with the job before their noses with efficiency and a careful regard for truth, taking no thought for the morrow.

#### A Faithful Picture

They didn't talk about human stories; they were callously ignorant of the appeal of sobstuff, but they held that the facts—the "particulars" they used to call them—mattered a great deal, and that truth was of greater importance than anything else. Of course, their work was quite often dull reading, but their mirrored image of the passing show was more faithful, if less highly coloured, than that which the junior of to-day holds up.

But the junior of to-day goes through a routine which does not greatly differ from the experience of the man just twice his age, except in one respect—speed. The daily papers have no juniors coming to journalism quite green for the purpose of learning a trade from the lowest rung, though here and there are young men with a *flair* for some timely specialism, who, by luck or influence, are able to get a footing at a time when they are, in the matter of general equipment, novices.

### Full of Surprises

To see the junior reporter in his natural condition you must look into the reporters' room of the provincial newspaper—daily, evening, or weekly. It is full of surprises for the novice, some pleasant, some the reverse. The raw junior sitting about hopefully waiting to be absorbed into the cheery "clack" which accompanies the daily or weekly production of the paper, needs all his *savoir faire* not to be resentful when he is asked to get some cigarettes for a not very polite senior. It may not fit in with his conception of the profession of journalism, but it matters that he should quickly build up a reputation for jumping to it with the outward appearance of willingness.

The increasing specialization in all departments of newspaper work will, as it affects the practice of journalism in these times, be dealt with later, but it needs to be indicated that specialization takes place as much in the news rooms and machine departments as in the editorial rooms—"upstairs"—and the knowledge of type faces, and the tricks of the trade which a receptive youth would pick up in that six months are of infinite value to the executive. This is not true alone of the newspaper worker. The executive in every department of industry is the better equipped for having been "through the shops."

### Closer Organization

The modern tendency in journalism is that these opportunities are provided much more infrequently than they used to be. This has come about in part by reason of the close organization of the printing trade. In the larger offices at all events the chances of the young journalist in the matter of picking up knowledge of case and the general processes of the practical departments are very much reduced. Emphasis may be fittingly laid upon the fact that where, in provincial offices, their chances of a more complete equipment are made available they should be fully used. It is still true that the best journalist is the good all-round man.

### The Junior's Day

Practice differs in provincial offices naturally, but there are certain processes which go to the fashioning of the junior reporter which are more or less common to them all. We have not considered the functions of the junior in London, for the reasons that they are few in number, and the organization of each office provides them with duties which are not to be compared with any other. It is definitely to the provinces that the junior must go for his training if it is to be complete.

There is at the beginning, and quite naturally, a good deal of fetching and carrying, and some measure of clerking to be done within the reporters' department. The writer had as one of his first jobs, when joining the reporters' department of an evening newspaper as a pupil, the task of fetching copy of the funeral of Queen Victoria. It looked simple enough, but in truth it was rather a high test to put on a very callow youth, for it involved a sea journey of twelve miles in very bitter weather, and quick movement in order to catch a return boat in time to make the journey of any value. Press telegraphy did in truth exist in those days, though nobody thought of using the telephone for such purposes,

but it was, in fact, a quicker method to carry copy, and, of course, infinitely cheaper, which was the governing factor.

### Really Valuable

And this measure of trotting about, which to the junior with ideas of his functions in a great profession may seem very undignified, has a great and real value. It teaches him the way about his town. He may have come to it a stranger. He knows the main streets maybe, and little besides. Almost his first task is to learn or improve his local geography, for this may mean the saving of time for everybody. Moreover, it brings the youngster into touch with news centres—for in the provincial town they are strictly defined—and with the people who are, according to degree, the sources of news.

Thus, he meets the police; he sees the way the force functions, and that is knowledge of the most useful sort. The view of police organization held by the ordinary citizen, who only comes into touch with the force at moments of crisis, is very different from that held by the journalist, who, perforce, sees the police at close quarters.

There are many things that the young journalist needs to be well-informed upon under the head of geography, and a very sound plan is to regard it as a first duty to become familiar with the general lay-out of a town; to know its street names, its short cuts, the situation of all public buildings, and so on. From that point it is but a step to the history of the town and its detail. How few among the young entrants bother about this. And how valuable it can be in half a hundred ways!

### His First Chance

The young reporter's chances of getting out of the ruck quickly depend always upon his suitability for tasks which crop up unexpectedly. Something happens at a moment, for instance, when the reporters' room is empty. The youngster

has been idling, or making use of the office library for the purposes indicated above according to his bent. A sudden call comes for information on a point of fact. A knows where to get it; B doesn't. Thus does A's chance fall to him.

In the last resort it is the young reporter whose general equipment is the most complete who gets his chance first. A tiny illustration will serve. A knows something about rugby; B may not have played it, or even watched it. Isn't it obvious? And that general principle will be found to apply all day and every day.

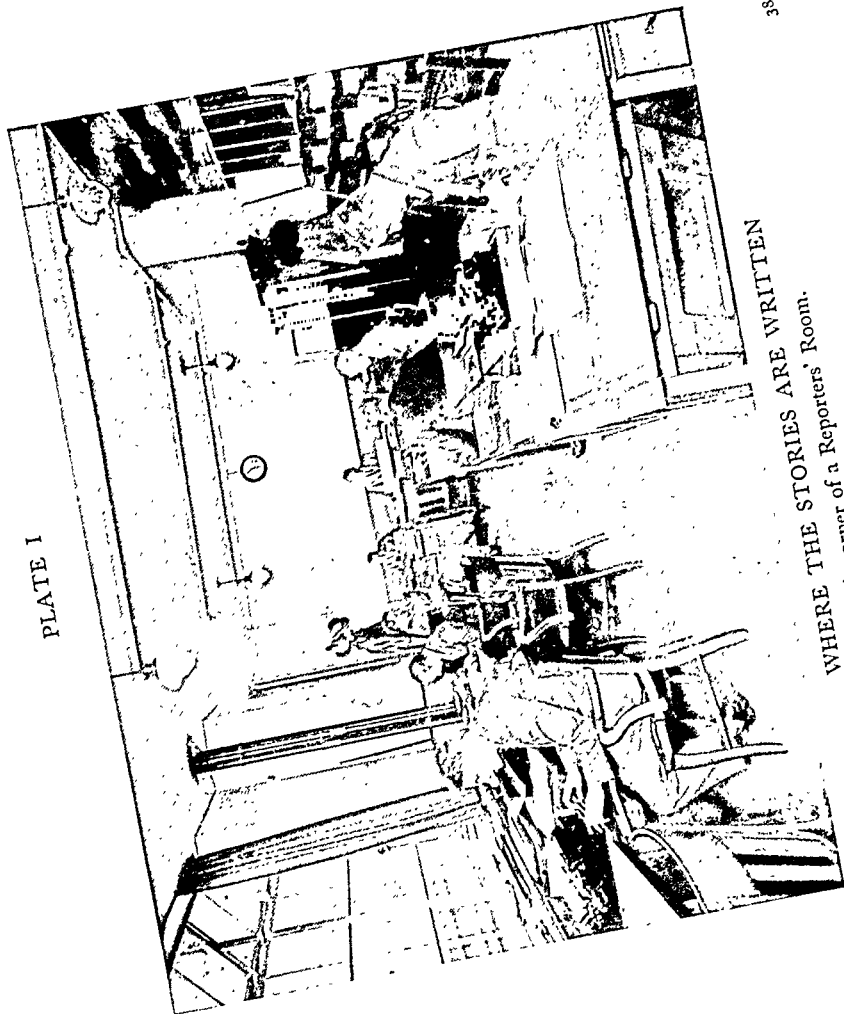
## CHAPTER VI THE SENIOR REPORTER

A DEFINITION is an obvious necessity here. A generation ago everybody knew precisely what the term indicated; to-day, it is one of half a dozen descriptive appellations, all meaning more or less the same thing, and yet not quite. A dictionary definition would be useless. A reporter is one who observes the passing show in the widest sense of the word, and pictures its detail for the benefit of the rest of the world. If he does it in the pedestrian fashion, which was common to all papers of good report twenty or thirty years ago, he is still called a reporter, but the alternative descriptions "Special Correspondent," "Our Own Investigator," "Special Commissioner," "Crime Investigator," all mean more or less the same thing.

Mr. Edgar Wallace, who was a reporter once, and one of the very best of them, still says "I am a reporter," which may be interpreted as the language of hyperbole. The man who brings in the news, however dressed up, is a reporter, and the type may be said to have three sub-divisions: good reporters, indifferent reporters, and bad reporters. There is, perhaps, one other sub-division. The stage reporter is a thing apart, in the sense that he is unlike anything belonging to real life, but, in a realistic age, even *he* is getting to look a little more like the truth.

We need not consider two of these classes in detail. The bad reporter doesn't remain a reporter long; the indifferent one is he who allows newspaper progress to pass him by without affecting his point of view. He may be all that is accurate—which is a prime virtue; he may be conscientious; he may be a good citizen, which is a good thing, seeing that he is a focus point, and must take some part in moulding

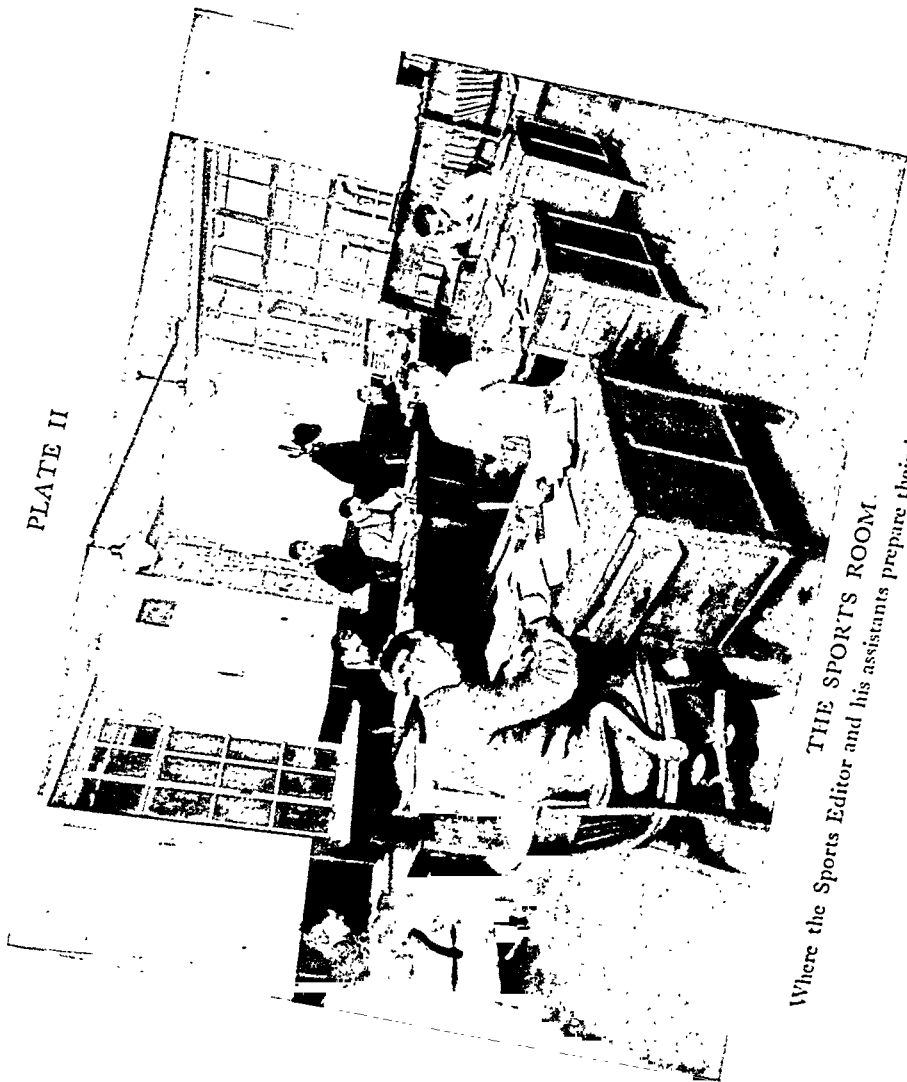
PLATE I



WHERE THE STORIES ARE WRITTEN  
A corner of a Reporters' Room.



PLATE II



THE SPORTS ROOM.  
Where the Sports Editor and his assistants prepare their important features.

the views of other people; but he cannot play his part successfully in the complex organism of the modern newspaper unless he is keeping his eyes opened and his mind attuned to the present and the future as well as the past.

### A Leader of Men

That may seem like a generality, applicable to every class in the community, but it is really more. The reporter is a leader of men in one sense of the phrase. He may not express his views in what he writes—he must not in most sets of circumstances—but it is equally true that everything he writes must express his mind and the condition of it.

He holds up a mirror, and it is clouded or clear, representing the truth or a twist of the truth, according to his nature and his equipment.

It may be the case that a really good reporter does not remain within his class long; he passes on to pure organization of news supply or to other aspects of newspaper production, but he remains a reporter by instinct, and he is a good news editor or whatever he may become because he was a good reporter.

### His Mind a Sponge

To get down to the practical aspect of the matter, the reporter must pay a good deal of attention to purely mundane things if his work is to be as good as it ought to be. His mind must, in one sense, be a sponge; he must learn something every day, and he must think about it in order that the knowledge may be properly applied.

It is frequently said of parsons that they ought to be allowed time for study in order that they may put forth their best effort; a reporter should be allowed time for study, too, but it isn't possible. He must study the passing show as it passes, and if he does that intelligently he cannot be other, in the course of a year or two, than a well-educated man.

But he must organize his knowledge and codify it. Just as the junior reporter must know his own town and its organization thoroughly well, so must his senior know his newspaper's constituency and the leading people in it. He must understand the principles of government in general and in its detail. He must know general history, and the history of his area, and though he picks up these things as he goes along he ought to supplement them by planned study.

### A Tidy Mind

The specialist has his place clearly defined on the large newspaper organizations, but it is the simple truth that the good all-rounder, as in the case of the junior reporter, is one of the best men to have on any sized staff. A good all-rounder with a useful specialism is a better man still.

All this imposes the need that the reporter shall have a tidy mind and a proper understanding of the use of mechanical aid to mind tidiness. There is no man living who can rely upon his brain, however well stored, to serve him with complete efficiency if it does not assist him to assemble knowledge and relate it, and yet it is probably true that the profession of journalism has more men in it with minds cluttered-up with odds and ends of unrelated knowledge than any other.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE DISTRICT REPORTER

THE editorial staff of a provincial newspaper differs in its organization from that of a metropolitan daily. The provincial paper covers, as far as local news is concerned, a definitely circumscribed area, and if it is to maintain its circulation it must cover every happening within that area which has any news interest. In order to do so, it has to station resident reporters in key positions. These men are known as district reporters, and each has an area assigned to him which may include one or more large towns, with the addition of a number of smaller towns and large villages.

In some cases, particularly with provincial daily papers which have large circulations, a district office is established in prominent towns, and sometimes two, or even more, reporters cover the ground, with a senior reporter in charge. This senior man often acts also as manager of the office, keeping the accounts and being responsible for the advertisement and other revenue which is received. In most cases, however, the district reporter works alone, with the telephone as a link between himself and his head office.

#### His Responsibility

The district reporter has considerable responsibility, and is an important link in the chain of news collection as it affects a provincial paper. He is, very largely, his own news editor and his own chief reporter. He must keep his own diary of engagements, and see that he misses nothing which may give the lead to his rivals. If his district is a large and populous one, he may easily find himself with a full diary of routine engagements every day, with little possibility of

finding time for writing local notes or specials. If his district is a scattered one, then half his working hours may easily be taken up in getting about a chain of small towns or villages on a motor-cycle or in a small car.

At all events, there are few district reporters who have very much time to spare. There are, however, many advantages which make this class of work attractive to a man with the right temperament. He is, to a considerable extent, his own master, suiting his working hours to the conditions of the job. His work gives him the opportunity of making a wide circle of friends, and at the same time he is able to spend a considerable amount of his time in the open air. This latter advantage is one highly prized by many district reporters, who have spent years at the work, and have refused successive opportunities of moving into the head office.

The satisfactory fulfilling of the functions of a district reporter requires conscientiousness as one main essential. The established circulation of his paper in the area can be seriously affected in course of time if the man in charge of the district is apt to slack and to ignore minor engagements. In the district the news paragraph has a big circulation pulling power, and no meeting is too small to warrant a few lines under the town or village heading.

### The Telephone

In many cases district reporters have the interests of both an evening and a weekly newspaper to look after. In such cases the evening paper, of course, must take precedence in attention, and this often necessitates constant use of the telephone in supplying news to the head office, particularly if a good train or bus service is not available. In such cases the morning paper is generally supplied with brief reports, the engagements being subsequently dealt with at greater length for the weekly paper.

With the more extensive use of news illustrations, even in the old-established country papers, the district reporter has now the additional responsibility of keeping his eye on the possibility of interesting photographs arising from happenings in his own area, and of advising his news editor when he thinks it worth while for a staff photographer to attend. Some district reporters carry their own cameras and supply their own photographs. In this connection it cannot be too strongly stressed that a knowledge of photography is of great value to every newspaper man. Many reporters make a point of always carrying a pocket camera, and a good many of them have found that their readiness to take a snap of a newsy happening has proved highly remunerative.

### The Typewriter

The district man is generally able to make regular use of a typewriter, and even in the rather conservative offices of old provincial weeklies the instruction is going out that whenever possible copy must be typed. The district man who omits to provide himself with a typewriter is merely making his job unnecessarily laborious and monotonous, particularly when he has several columns of copy to turn out regularly every day.

The district reporter is scarcely able to specialize. Every type of reporting engagement comes his way. He generally starts the day with a number of telephone calls to police stations and hospitals in his area at which he is unable to make a personal call. Sometimes one of these calls reveals that a serious accident has occurred a few miles from his town, and he may have to leave immediately for the scene of the accident. Failing this, he will probably spend the first hour or so of his day in the police court. To-day, when motoring offences are rather prevalent, it is no uncommon thing for eighty or ninety cases to be dealt with at the

weekly sitting of a county bench. After a hurried lunch, the district man will probably have to attend the meeting of his rural council, and the afternoon may be filled in with a whole series of engagements, ranging from a sale of work to a horticultural show, with a farmers' dinner and a concert to finish up the evening.

### Good Training Ground

It is a busy life, but it is a wonderful training ground for the young journalist because the scope of the work is so varied, and at the same time it stimulates a sense of responsibility when the reporter has to work so largely on his own, and without supervision. From the standpoint of the ambitious young pressman, however, it must be stated that district work does not offer a very encouraging outlook. The district man is apt to be isolated from his head office, and to be overlooked when opportunities of promotion occur amongst the head office staff. Indeed, the really good district man often makes himself so indispensable in his own district that his executive chief hesitates to take him away from it, even if his qualities as a journalist are so high that he is marked out for promotion. This is the one danger of a district reporter's job—that it isolates him in a rural backwater, where there are few chances of his making headway in the profession.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE SUB-EDITOR

STRICTLY the title is not sufficiently descriptive. Thus baldly stated, it would appear that an individual member of the newspaper industry is all-sufficing within his particular orbit. The truth is that he stands for a complete and highly efficient system of office organization, the exponent, above all things, of the modern idea of giving all the news in the most attractive form.

Look, if you have the opportunity, at the papers of thirty years ago—the twelve-page “dailies” of sober mien; the six-page “halfpenny” papers, as they were; the four-page “evenings”; and the larger “weeklies,” which often furnished a full eight pages for a penny. The comparison with the newspaper output of to-day defines the sub-editorial function with precision. The “halfpennies” of the time of the South African War (wars are the greatest of all causes of increased circulation) have doubled their price and increased their range incredibly, and their size has grown thirty-fold. The four-page “evenings,” metropolitan and provincial, are often twelve pages at double the original price, and the “weeklies” run regularly to sixteen and twenty pages.

#### The Evolution of Sunday Papers

Since the beginning of the century the Sunday papers have provided the greatest revolution of all. They have the place they have won in the minds of the people as the result of the war, which made Sunday newspapers universal, just as the South African War created (in the widest sense) the “daily” habit. All these things, the growth of the Sunday newspapers most of all, have been ministered to by the sub-editors, a great and modest company of highly efficient



technicians, of the very existence of whom, except as a group name, the public is ignorant.

There are no figures available to show what proportion of sub-editors—the men whose mission it is to present the news—graduated as reporters, the men who gather the news. It is very good that in every organization there should be some degree of interchangeability, but there is of necessity a difference in the point of view. Both, it may be, are arriving at the same goal, but not by the same paths. The qualifying characteristics differ.

The sub-editor needs an orderly mind, a sense of proportion, the capacity for merging rapidity with accuracy, the power of absorbing what is roughly termed general knowledge, the even more important gift of making use of it, the faculty of being able to work in an atmosphere of excitement without being affected by it. Given these qualities, plus a sense of the team spirit and the capacity for quick decision, a man may succeed in the sub-editor's room.

### What a "Sub" Must Know

If a junior reporter is the better qualified by caseroom experience, this is almost a matter of necessity to the sub-editor. He must know type faces; the name of each fount; its relation to the column width; he must acquire a general knowledge of practice at the stone in order that he may not impose time-wasting and pointless tasks upon others, just for the sake of being different. A sub-editor who realizes that a stonehand is a human being from whom something may be learnt has found a way of saving seconds which, in the course of a week, amount to a lot of time. To put it in another way, there must be perfect liaison between those members of the organization providing the news and the mechanics who make it usable as a matter of commerce. The sub-editor is the connecting link.

### His Specialisms

The sub-editor is a specialist who has a greater value if he multiplies his specialisms. Upon the metropolitan organs specialism is often carried to a point at which it imposes a handicap upon the practitioner. Thus, the man who spends all his time in a court—perhaps the same court for years—as a reporter narrows his orbit dangerously. There are many such, and it makes for general convenience, though it is not good for the individual.

And in like manner, the sub-editor driven by circumstance to canalize his work between the narrow banks of a particular specialism, be it sport or industry, finance or the law, must, for the good of his soul, see that it does not absorb him utterly. Upon one daily there is a man who spends his days *reducing a tangled mass of detail into intelligible market information.*

It is a job which would drive a “general” man insane in a day. In the constant business of filling the pint pot from the quart tankard, that man’s work does not bulk largely. But look at the way in which the market information is reduced to a useful skeleton. It is barely understandable to the non-commercial mind, but it is as plain as a contents bill across the road to the man who governs his business by the daily price records, and for his sake it simply must be as accurate as the endeavour of a specialist can make it.

### The City “Sub”

Yet the man who gathers this material together daily, and presents it in a half-column of space, is unknown to all who benefit by his work. In like manner, the City sub-editor must work with the precision of a chartered accountant upon a stream of information which, if it could be printed in full, would fill a dozen pages a day. He must each day peptonize the whole of it, and in the result it must represent an accurate picture of City happenings. The reputation of a

newspaper depends to a greater degree upon it than upon the most colourful descriptive writing of the star reporter or the pungent comment of the outside contributor with a name who gets a big cheque.

So, to develop the point a little further, it may not greatly damage the politician who does not know the names of the small capital cities of Europe if he makes a slip. Few people who hear his words will know any better, but the foreign sub-editor must know and must see that a similar mistake does not see the light of day.

### The Foreign News "Sub"

The reputation of a newspaper for the accuracy of its foreign news is a vital thing. Think of the difficulty of keeping up to date in a continent in a constant state of flux; think of the place in world affairs that has been won by *The Times* or the *Manchester Guardian* by the sustained accuracy of its foreign news, and then, in order to appreciate its significance, set down on a piece of paper the names of the Prime Ministers of as many European States as you can remember. You will recall three or four if you represent anything like the average, but not more.

These are but three of the half-dozen specialisms for which a well-organized newspaper must make provision, apart from the ordinary sub-editorial staff handling the daily mass of copy from agency sources, from the newspaper's own staff of newsgetters and specialist writers, and from its correspondents at home and abroad. All these men have, as a rule, a specialism of their own in the sense that they perform one of their allotted tasks with a greater skill than the others.

### Essential Qualities

It is the business of the chief sub-editor to know these and to apply the knowledge for the maintenance of efficiency. The special qualities of the specialist have been indicated.

Those needed by the general sub-editor are somewhat the same. A good sub-editor must be resourceful and alert with the gift (one that can be cultivated) of seeing the wood as well as the trees. He must be able to detect the tiny grain amongst the chaff, and he must do it quickly. He must, in particular, be ruthless about chaff. Inferentially he must have an infinite patience, lest he miss the grain, and equally important is the need that he be blessed with a sense of proportion and a sense of humour.

Without these, the last especially, no man can be a good sub-editor. The capacity for rapid decisions, and for sticking to them (as long as they are worth sticking to), matters equally, for the sub-editor's department of a big newspaper organization is the nerve-centre of the whole. Inefficiency there will take the power from the whole since it is the conduit through which the whole stream of effort must pass.

### **“ The Perfect Sub-editor ”**

It has been said that the perfect sub-editor has not been born yet, and that good ones are rare. The latter part of the statement at least is true. The qualities needed are so various—at times they seem to be contradictory—that the man who has them all would seem to be wasted in a job which must always be anonymous, and in which there is a definite danger that the good man must retain his niche when promotion is possible, because the person who can adequately fill it is not available.

Every good news editor, and most editors, have learned their jobs as sub-editors, but before they reach their pinnacles, a vital and necessary stage on the journey is a period of service in a chief sub-editorship.

### **The Chief Sub-editor**

The chief sub-editor is the mystery man of modern newspaper organization as far as the general public is concerned.

There is no general appreciation of his functions, or of the way in which he impresses his character day by day upon the paper he serves. Large decisions are made on the daily papers in conference; the general trend of policy is a corporate matter, but in the important matter of interpretation the chief sub-editor plays a leading part. He must, of course, know the sub-editorial technique, and beyond that he must become the master of a prime sub-editorial quality, the flair for precision in detail, lest it becomes his master.

It follows that a chief sub-editor of a large organization must have the gift of leadership. He must be a disciplinarian but not a martinet. He needs a light touch in his handling of men and his handling of news, for heaviness of hand shows itself in the morning.

### His Way of Working

Study, if you would know something of the chief sub-editor and his way of working, the "splash" stories of the morning and evening papers on a given day. Ordinarily, they will not greatly differ except in the minutiae of treatment, because, nowadays, newspapers are less individual than they were a generation ago. The same news sources are available; the torrent which pours into each office daily is pretty much the same in them all, and on five days out of six you would be pardoned for thinking that there is a single controlling mind.

On the odd day when nothing, it may be, stands out, the individuality of the chief sub-editor finds expression in the presentation of a new angle, and the plain unvarnished truth of this point, as affecting the general public, is that the paper with an individual chief sub-editor is the paper which does not earn the criticism of the man in the train: "The so-and-so is getting dull; think I'll try the Daily X."

It would be valueless to picture the chief sub-editor and his department of any one newspaper, because every

organization functions differently. There are no rules except the golden rule of speed in the moulding of the daily spate of news into a readable whole, and it may be argued that the sub-editor is, from that point of view, a cog in a machine rather than an individual unit.

### In the Provinces

Upon the provincial papers there is a lesser degree of this specialization, less subdivision; and on the weeklies, less still. There the sub-editorial staff, large or small, handles the news, more or less, as it comes to hand, and it necessarily happens that an editor has to act, often enough, not only as his own news editor—and better that he should—but take his share in the sub-editorial work as well. The individual touch can, indeed, only be secured in that way.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE NEWS EDITOR

THE news editor is one of the most important of the several architects who plan the building of a daily newspaper. His work in any newspaper office, whether it be weekly or daily, is highly vital, but it is in the morning or evening newspaper office that he has his greatest role. In such an office the function of the news editor is one of great executive responsibility. To a national newspaper a live, discriminating, and enterprising news editor is the vital spark which energizes its news outlook.

The scope of his work can be best summarized in the brief statement that he is responsible for a steady and continuous flow of up-to-the-minute news into the newspaper office. Part of this news supply is, of course, a mechanical process, actuated by daily routine, which varies little at any season of the year, but like all machinery, that of newsgathering, though it may have its stated daily function, requires oiling and watching. The news editor must keep as careful an eye on the routine side of his news collection as he does on that other side of his work which calls for a more imaginative stimulation. This latter aspect of the working of the news machine is the one which gives full scope to the abilities of a really able news editor who is always keen to scent out new pathways through the daily jungle of news stories which lead to "scoops" and readable "splashes."

#### The Ideal

The ideal news editor is one who aims to get all the obvious stories into his paper, with a noticeable surplus of good stories which no competitor has been able to secure. By "obvious" stories one means the best of the stories which

it can be reasonably assumed will have reached every newspaper office via the ordinary channels, either through the news agencies or the newspaper's own news-gathering organization.

Every day every news editor handles stories which no one experienced in his craft would think of casting aside. These are the stories which, if they do not occupy a "splash" position on one of the main news pages, have at least a top-of-column position on one of the subsidiary news pages. They are the kind of story one can depend upon finding in any of six daily papers one cares to buy. But the stories the alert news editor loves to handle are those whose germ he has chanced to discover somewhere on the outer fringe of the ocean of copy that has been pouring into the office during the day, in the judicious follow-up of a seemingly promising paragraph, or in the inquiries he has set afoot on receiving a brief but significant hint from someone in the know.

Nothing gives him greater satisfaction than to find that the story he has "splashed" is exclusive to his own paper. If he can manage to get into the same issue half a dozen minor stories with good news value, which are also exclusive, then he does, indeed, count himself a man blessed.

### Two Essentials

It will thus be appreciated that the two main lines of activity in the news editor's life are to ensure that he misses none of the news which is essential, and at the same time gets his fair share of that which is exclusive. The word "exclusive" can, of course, be made to cover a multitude of news classifications, but it can only be applied justifiably to really vital news stories which convey some information to the reader which is new and important.

The really effective exclusive story may open up entirely new ground, or it may be a development of a story which other papers that have dealt with it have failed to discover.



Sometimes such a development may be even more intriguing than the original story itself. For this reason every news editor must be constantly on the alert to see that no possibility of a minor story containing the germ of a really big "splash" is overlooked. This, too, when there may be three good stories running in which the public may be taking a daily interest. It is at such times when the news editor may be pardoned a relaxation of vigilance in the pursuit of exclusives. But this embarrassment of riches, as far as good news is concerned, does not always prevail, and in times of plenty the news editor is always putting aside ideas which may prove useful when a slack news period, or the silly season, begins.

Nearly every news editor could tell of really big stories which have been discovered in the course of an inquiry which was being made on some entirely different line. It is seldom the diary engagements (i.e. the routine engagements which reporters have been marked to cover) which produce the best copy. The most interesting stories have a knack of cropping up in the most unlooked-for places and at the most unexpected moments. It is not always the staff men who find them, but at the same time it is generally the staff men who can deal with them best once they have been found.

### The Search for News

As an incessant searcher for news, the news editor must keep himself constantly and closely in touch with the news that was yesterday, the news that is to-day, and the news which will be to-morrow. This means regular and systematic reading of his contemporaries, and every form of the fleeting literature of the moment. He must read not only the principal newspapers of the metropolis and the provinces, but also a very wide section of the trade, technical, and specialist press. The latter class of periodical is numerous and

has a very comprehensive scope, ranging from the publications which cater for the specialist needs of the professional classes, such as doctors, solicitors, accountants, and architects, to the more circumscribed organs which speak for the different sections of the trade union movement. All these journals cover the developments which are constantly taking place in some form or other of professional, commercial, or industrial activity, and often their own "exclusives" give a hint which can be developed into a news special of general interest. Some really first-class news stories have been discovered in this way, and it is one of the most fruitful sources of good copy.

In the big newspaper offices in these days, a careful scrutiny of the latest books, particularly those of the confessions of well-known people, is maintained by the literary editor, who is sometimes the means of providing a good double-column "splash" when some particularly gossipy or daring book of reminiscences makes its appearance, and thus relieves the news editor of a certain responsibility in this direction. But sometimes a news editor can scarcely afford to neglect keeping personally in touch with the literature of the day. He cannot spare much time for specialization in his reading, but, as far as his professional needs are concerned, the most remunerative form of reading is, undoubtedly, that which tends to keep him *au fait* with the latest ideas bearing on the leading questions of the day.

### Ideas Have Vogues

In these days ideas have vogues; they work in cycles, as it were, and they generally give adequate warning that they are about to occupy the public platform for their own brief hour. This applies particularly to questions of international importance, which succeed one another regularly in their claims upon notice in the public Press. It is part of the news editor's job to make himself familiar with every aspect of these questions just before they claim attention, in order

that he may be fully equipped to deal with them from every angle of possible news interest.

One of the modern aspects of journalism is that it tends to be more helpful to the reader. Journalism, to-day, is more informative. It seeks not only to give the reader news but to explain just what the news means. This will, undoubtedly, be developed even more extensively in the near future. International questions, for instance, have their own special phraseology, much of which is almost unintelligible to the ordinary reader. One of the duties of the news editor of to-day is to see that news of this kind is simplified for the benefit of the general reader, and that the explanatory side of the work of his sub-editors is not overlooked.

### **Building-up a " Splash "**

The building-up of a good news story is not so simple as it may appear to the casual reader. It may necessitate several hours' work on the part of four or five reporters before the facts have been obtained, and then they have to be welded together into a logical sequence. A story which breaks in or near the home town may have important bearings in some obscure part of the country. This may mean the dispatching of a special representative to the spot at a moment's notice.

In such cases a considerable amount of organization has hurriedly to be done. Time-tables must be consulted, and the reporter given his instructions without the waste of a moment. It is no uncommon thing for a reporter of a big daily newspaper to find himself being whirled to the railway station in a taxi, and dashing breathlessly to a train which is already on the move, with but the faintest idea of the story he is being sent to cover. He may simply have had thrust into his hand an early proof of an inadequate story, or, indeed, may merely have been told to ring up the office as soon as he arrives, for further instructions.

## Organizing Ability

The hurry and scurry of daily journalism makes heavy demands upon the organizing ability of the news editor, and his decisions, when time is dead against him, must be rapid and accurate. The exigencies of the occasion may mean that he has three men speeding away to different parts of the country to piece together the links of a promising story. He does not know whether they will prove successful; all of them, indeed, may fail, but one may have luck on his side, and be able to get sufficient of a story to justify a "splash" on the leading news page. Often it is all very much of a gamble whether he will get his story in time for his main editions. At all events, he has to legislate for all the possibilities of the occasion.

Sometimes, just when he has given up all hope of getting anything from the men he has sent out, and has filled up the space on his final news page with an alternative story, a reporter comes through with copy which is even better than he had hoped for. This is a moment when the wheels of the editorial machine, which are never geared for slow speed, hum a little louder than usual. A small corps of shorthand men is quickly organized to take the story in brief takes over the telephone, and single slips, or even half-slips, of copy are rushed to the chief sub-editor. In a few minutes the story has been "subbed," and the head-lines have gone down to the composing department, where the overseer, or one of his assistants, has split the copy up into equally brief "takes," in order that they may be put quickly into type by the lino-operators. At the same time a special contents bill has been rushed down, and in a little more time than it takes to tell has been put into type and is printing on the bill machine.

## Saving Minutes

On the stone in the composing-room, where the copy is

made up, the sub-editor in charge has cleared a space for the late story, and almost before the reading department has hurriedly O.K.'d the final proof, the forme is being rushed to the stereotypers. It may be, but it cannot always afford to be, a minute or so late, but the news editor turns away with the satisfaction of knowing that he has a good "splash" story which may prove to be exclusive. Even here his responsibility does not end. The press-room has to be informed of the brief but unavoidable delay in order that the staff can make an extra spurt to balance matters as far as the publishing department is concerned.

The publisher, too, has to be acquainted and informed of any special local appeal which the story may have, in order that he can put in extra supplies for the agents in areas in which the story may create an extra demand. Then attention must be given to the possibility of a follow-up story for to-morrow's editions, and arrangements made accordingly.

### The Vital Link

In the offices of any importance the job of the news editor has many ramifications. With the increasing importance that is placed upon news illustrations, a careful liaison must be established with the photographic and process departments. In really big offices an art editor generally supervises the main picture page, and it is obvious that there must be constant contact between the art editor and the news department if the picture service of the paper is to have the latest touch of topicality. In fact, in addition to his ordinary duties of supervising news collection, devising news "stunts," and stimulating special news features, the news editor must act as the main connecting link between all the departments in the office, and more particularly between the editorial and the mechanical departments.

This aspect of his liaison work is particularly important, especially in times when there is a need for really vital rush work to be done. On such occasions, and they occur very frequently, the news composing-room is as much the centre of his anxiety as any part of the editorial department which is under his immediate control.

## CHAPTER X

### THE ART EDITOR

THE art editor's trade is a new one in the newspaper field, comparatively speaking, but it is a specialism calling for great qualities of initiative and judgment, because there are difficulties of technique to be overcome even yet. These difficulties are being gradually mastered, but it is also true that new ones arise almost daily.

The art editor's fight with the clock is an unfortunately fiercer affair than in any other department, for the reason that the stages lying between the "breaking" of a picture "story" and its presentation are so many and complicated. The record of a given event in words has to be set in type, moulded with the rest of the page, and cast, but a picture, once taken, has to be developed, printed, retouched (all processes in which there is definite limit to speed), and then rephotographed on a wet plate, developed a second time, etched, and fixed. Then, and not till then, it is fitted to the written record which has only to be set into type.

#### Unceasing Struggle

The story of the picture page of the daily newspaper is worthy of a book. It is the record of a never-ceasing struggle against time, and with an ever-changing technique. Compare these complexities for a moment with the early days of printed pictures before photography made it practicable to allow the picture to follow the event almost within the hour.

The wood-blocks from which the early pictures were made, those which appeared in the *Illustrated London News*, for instance, had no quality of speed. The drawing, if it was half-page size, as many of them were, had to be divided into

four parts, and four craftsmen "cut" the picture on wood, and the pieces were then joined. To have given the work to a single man would have lengthened the job too greatly for even those leisurely days.

### Early Complexities

It was because the early days of the photographic process were so complicated—the processes connected with the use of the wet plate are indicated—that wood-cuts remained in use long after photography was invented. Indeed, until the hand-camera was perfected, what are now called action pictures were generally drawn and not photographed. Even in comparatively modern times the drawn picture was used for scenes which, in the nature of things, the camera could not encompass. We could never have had the Melton Prior pictures of war (in the last generation) if they had been taken with a camera.

Thus it happened that the weekly illustrated papers had the picture field all to themselves until quite recent times. They were not picture papers as the term is now understood; they were periodicals with pictures in them, but as examples of fine drawing, of good blockmaking, and of careful printing, they were very good indeed. They were able to tell the story of the large ceremonial in which the later Victorians delighted. They were the true pioneers of the up-to-the-minute methods which animate the picture world to-day.

Progress in this particular department has been almost breathless, but it has varied in character. Twenty years ago, those concerned with illustrated journalism were struggling to improve their technical equipment and their own technique. Their cameras lacked speed; and they were less certain. An artist who knew his job would provide some sort of pictorial record of a big event, whereas there was a doubt about the early camera functioning adequately if called upon to perform above its capacity.



### Half-tones

And, of course, it was a slow job, the making of half-tone pictures being even slower still. In that matter, as well as in the technical perfection of photographic plant, the last decade has seen a measure of development which can only be described as amazing. Electrical progress has lent its aid, and the generation which has been growing up with the half-tone has grasped its technique with a speed which could not be reached by those who had to change over from the old process. Close organization and this high skill can, in these days, turn out a picture from the developed print as speedily as the written record of the same event can be set on the linotypes.

But it is not in these matters that the true romance of the picture business may be seen. It is in the department of organization, and that, in its turn, is the fruit of the hectic competition of the past few years. Newspaper executives are compelled to spend on pictures sums which greatly exceed what may be called the news justification of a given event, and most of the money is spent on transport.

An international event in a capital city 600 miles away does not present the difficulties in this respect of even a couple of years ago. Then it was a matter of using air transport at great cost; to-day, and in the future increasingly, the telegraphed picture holds the field. And the results at the moment of writing are amazingly good. Moreover, they will improve.

### The Picture Agencies

This, however, is an aspect of newspaper development which will be dealt with later. The present need is to trace the story of illustrated journalism up to date. The truth is that the earliest workers in this field were not connected directly with the newspapers, for long before the papers were equipped with staff photographers, free-lances,

working alone, met the demand with a ready supply of pictures.

Out of these units the picture agencies grew. Some of the actual pioneers are still working, and there is one organization, founded by a man who took all his own pictures thirty years ago, which exists for no other present purpose than to market the thousands of plates which he exposed either for Press purposes, which was only a profitable sideline to him, or for the post card trade.

The time came when the newspaper executives added first photographers, and then half-tone plants, to their equipment. At first, only those papers specializing in pictures did so, but the others quickly followed suit. The organization of picture supply is a highly competitive business in which staff and agency men participate. In consequence, the art editor has generally all the picture material he can require, but the system has this weakness, that it is not under his full control. The business of the photographic agency is to get and sell pictures, and there are times, naturally, when the emphasis is laid upon quantity rather than quality.

### Supply Points

The efficient art editor sees to it that his picture supply has, in addition to news value, the note of novelty. He has his seasonal difficulties. Dark winter nights have an effect upon supply, and there are slump periods which have nothing to do with the weather. The art editor has to provide against lean times, and to look ahead no less anxiously, in order that he may make preliminary provision for the big "break" of picture opportunity, spending in advance as generously as he has the power to do.

But a duty no less important is to organize his department for the saving of seconds. Its general lay-out must be imaginatively planned; he must (or he fails in an elementary

duty) see that the team spirit is the mainspring of the whole, and he must pay the closest attention to his filing system, especially in regard to portraits. This may seem elementary, but it is a matter which is too often regarded as a spare-time job. It should never be this, because if the index plan is faulty, the system is liable to function badly at a busy moment.

### The Index

Every picture should be indexed and cross-indexed for safety, and the reference should bear not only the date, but the precise indication of the whereabouts of the block. Staff photographers should index plates, too, taking care that the reference clearly points to the plate, lest it be necessary to open a dozen boxes in a hurried search.

The general index and storage plan varies according to the individual. A name index may suffice for portraits, and of this there should be two copies, one maintained by the department, and the other, carefully kept up to date, in the possession of the news editor.

Then, for general pictures of news events, the index should have a subject basis, but the plan must be designed with care, and adhered to. It is fatal for more than one person to undertake this task, because a subject can bear possibly three or four equally descriptive titles, and no two people would choose the same. At the same time, it is no less necessary that another person should be familiar with the system in order that it may be intelligible in emergency.

### Cross-indexing

Cross-indexing is important, but it must not be allowed to become burdensome. The needs of an index system for photograph and block are that it should be at once simple and complete; rigid, and yet not slavishly rigid; and that it should be frequently tested, not at moments of emergency, by the responsible head of the department.

### Captions

Another task about which the art editor cannot afford to be other than precise, concerns the captions. The agencies have effective systems of pasting typewritten indications of the picture's nature from which the caption can be written, but in regard to the work of staff men, the urgencies of the moment frequently result in a picture passing to the process-room without identification. The print may not be thoroughly dry, possibly. The photographer learns on his first job never to write on the back of a print, but it is his duty to letter or number it (in a corner), and, before he does anything else, prepare a rough caption, bearing the same letter or number, and hand it to the art editor.

### Importance of Co-ordination

This, too, is one of the obvious things quite often left undone, which produces confusion beyond measure. The art editor must add a vivid news sense, the capacity to set his machinery swiftly working, and of seeing that it functions according to plan.

The whole picture process is so complicated; made up of so many detailed processes in which so many people take part, that unless it is carefully watched it will break down. The art editor must maintain discipline in the photographers' room and in the process-room, while taking care not to interfere with technical detail too much. The process-room manager, generally, knows his job.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE EDITOR

To become the editor of a newspaper, preferably a daily newspaper with a nation-wide circulation, is the ambition of most young journalists when they put their feet on the threshold of the craft. It is a healthy and a perfectly understandable desire. It is not always retained. There are men in Fleet Street, and in the provinces, too—men who are first-class journalists in every sense of the word—who have preferred to remain reporters, although opportunities of advancement through the other grades of journalism have not been lacking.

They prefer the excitement and the thrill of the daily chase after news, with the never-ending variety of experience which it brings, to the more ordered routine of an "indoor job," even though it may lead to a more highly-paid executive post. Many journalists have to make the choice at some period of their careers, between working for the interest which is in the job, and sacrificing that interest for personal advancement in a pecuniary sense. A writing journalist, for instance, may find it difficult to put down his pen to assume responsibilities of a purely executive nature. It all depends upon the depth of the journalist's personal ambition.

Generally speaking, the young journalist may be advised to accept every opportunity of advancement which may come his way, irrespective of the department to which it may lead. It is always possible to retrace one's steps if the change does not prove congenial, but it is not so easy to recover lost ground once an opportunity has been lost.

### Changed Conditions

Like the newspaper itself, the functions and the responsibilities of the editor have changed very considerably in

recent years. It is, in fact, no exaggeration to say that the day of the great editor, as Victorian and Edwardian times knew him, has passed. How many readers, to-day, know the name of the man who edits their favourite newspaper? How many people could give the names of the editors of six of the best known newspapers in the country? It is doubtful if ten in a thousand could do so.

This is not because the spirit of anonymity has entered more deeply into journalism—as a matter of fact, it is less the rigid rule it was not so many years ago. It is largely because editorship has lost a good deal of its more popularly-conceived traditions.

### Co-operative Effort

Not so many years ago an editor was commonly regarded as a potentate in his own domestic dominions, who ruled by the force of his own personality, and was a law unto himself as far as the editorial control of his paper was concerned. The editorial control of a modern newspaper of importance is less a matter of individual direction than one of co-operative effort shared by a number of people, some of them journalists, and others business men to whom the running of a newspaper is, in essence, a commercial undertaking, with the annual balance-sheet as the deciding measure of success. Policy, the foundation stone of journalism of the older regime, is far less of a perplexity than the daily problem of a good news "lead."

The newspaper of yesterday expressed its own opinions, often forcibly, on questions of the hour; the newspaper of to-day allows the expression of a dozen conflicting opinions in its columns. It seeks to provide a forum rather than a formula. It must seek also, in these days of the race for circulation, to provide a medium of ever-increasing effectiveness for its advertising clientele. For these reasons there have been many modifications in the editorial function.

## Editorial Control

Limitations of editorial control and responsibility depend upon the type and importance of the newspaper. On a big daily newspaper something in the nature of an editorial directorate takes the place of the one-man control, which is commonly in force in the smaller offices. Ordinarily, it consists of an editor-in-chief, a managing editor, and an assistant editor, with a news editor and half-a-dozen specialist editors to handle the features. The first three form the real editorial triumvirate.

The editor-in-chief is, of course, the figurehead, wielding the executive influence which finally settles the difficult problems which constantly arise in a big editorial office. He is responsible to the board of directors for the editorial control of the newspaper, and for the expression of the policy of the paper under the many different circumstances by which newspaper policy may be affected. On the business side a position of similar responsibility is held by the general manager.

## The Managing Editor

The managing editor has many important functions. He has direct executive contact with the editorial staff, and has responsibilities in regard to finance in so far as it is connected with the editorial side of the newspaper. His duties are, indeed, a mixture of editorial supervision and purely business administration. The executive aspect of newspaper production in the big offices is far more complex than ever before, and this has made the splitting-up of responsibility inevitable. In this respect, although there may be slight modifications of method and routine, the organization of most large offices is moulded on a similar pattern.

The managing editor has a highly responsible position. He is largely concerned in managerial questions which arise having an editorial bias. For this reason he is always a

man of wide editorial training and experience, with a *flair* for administration, and possessing sound business acumen and judgment. It is a position which carries pecuniary rewards equal to the heavy responsibilities which are shouldered.

The assistant editor is a personage whose duties are various. They are generally more purely editorial (in the literary sense of the word) than administrative (in the business sense of the term). The position is a useful stepping-stone to either of the others already mentioned, but more often to a managing editorship.

### A Dying Antagonism

One cannot deal adequately with this aspect of newspaper work without touching upon the change that has come over journalism in recent years in relation to the business side. Not so many years ago the editorial and the business departments were as poles apart, both in their office and personal relationships. It is not too much to say that the feeling between them amounted to active antagonism, which at times was highly detrimental to the interests of both, and anything but beneficial to individual newspaper concerns.

There were faults on both sides. The editorial staff—or the “literary gents,” as they were often referred to—were apt to regard themselves as infinitely superior to any other unit in the personal machinery of the newspaper, and to resent any interference which was dictated by mere business policy. “Business,” indeed, was a nauseous word to them, and they were too readily inclined to undervalue the commercial side of newspaper activity. They viewed with alarm the growing insistence of the advertiser for space and special positions, and when newspapers began to develop special advertisement departments, with a separate manager and staff, they were ready to believe that the newspaper heaven was about to fall.



On the other hand, there was sometimes an inclination on the part of the business executive to disregard, and, occasionally, to over-ride, legitimate editorial opinions, and to place advertising on a higher plane than news.

### A New Outlook

But all this has changed, and although there may still remain vestiges of the line dividing the two departments, it is no longer the hostile frontier of the old days. The modern journalist, however strongly his news sense and editorial instincts may be developed, has acquired a new sense of proportion. His newspaper perspective has altered. He realizes that newspaperdom is a highly organized industry, that many of its older traditions are effete, and that present-day conditions demand changed methods and a new outlook. He realizes that "business" has become the bedrock of the industry, and he is no longer inclined to avoid contact with it. He has, indeed, developed a personal interest in it, so much so that we find him stepping frequently from an editorial position into one of responsibility on the business side. The two departments have no longer a barrier of antipathy between them. In both London and the provinces journalists are well represented on newspaper executives.

Editorial responsibilities vary so greatly, according to the importance of the newspaper, that it is not easy to define them in detail. On a big London "daily" the editor-in-chief may have little actual contact with the personnel which is responsible for the production of the paper, although his influence may, at the same time, be none the less active.

On a smaller provincial journal the editor may take a personal share in the routine of his department, even contributing a special feature, or writing some of the "leaders" or editorial notes. In this chapter the endeavour has been to deal with editorial work generally, rather than to particularize.

### Hidden Risks

An editor is relieved of much of his responsibility by a good staff, particularly by his news editor and his sub-editors. For this reason the selection of his staff is obviously a matter of importance. In general practice a discriminating reporter does not pass his own problems on to the sub-editors, unless there is a special reason for so doing, and then he never fails to draw attention to any hidden dangers that may exist in the story with which he has had to deal. The best reporter has news instincts, plus the sub-editorial scent for a "snag." The good sub-editor passes nothing of which he has the slightest doubt. Generally speaking, no risks are taken in newspaper work to-day, and in the face of a risk, few editors are in doubt as to the course to take.

In most editorial problems that are passed on to him, the function of the editor is to decide whether any risk exists. The hidden risks which do not reveal themselves until too late (in the shape of a lawyer's letter or a writ), are those which cause the trouble in newspaper work.

### Propaganda : Its Varieties

One of the things against which an editor has to be constantly on his guard is subtle propaganda. The various shapes which it assumes have increased greatly in recent years, and the volume in which it pours into newspaper offices gets larger every year. It can be placed under three heads: political, institutional, and commercial. Some of it has a certain news value, but the greater part of it is pure propaganda decked out attractively to persuade newspapers to accept it.

Its increasing quantity and variety are due, in the first place, to the ever-widening activities of Press agents and commercial publicists who have made publicity an art, and who have a large circle of clients. Sometimes they work

directly, sending paragraphs or articles into the newspaper offices of the country. At other times they work indirectly, through the medium of a letter to the editor, intended for the correspondence column of the newspaper, signed by and bearing the address of a more or less well-known public person. Many of these letters are even sent out on the newspaper of the House of Commons, or from one of the social or professional clubs.

The germ of free advertisement is generally hidden cleverly by a few facts or questions of general interest, and in most cases the idea is not only to get publication of the first letter, but also to start a controversy in the editorial columns. It is not often that this kind of thing escapes the vigilance of an experienced editor. In fact, in most large offices, it is seldom allowed to get so far as the editor's room.

The ground on which the seed falls most fruitfully is in the columns of small country newspapers, which do not mind using a certain amount of free copy. In order to take full advantage of this fact some Press agents send out regularly a complete series of features, such as a women's feature, a gardening "special," and a wireless article, and are apparently repaid sufficiently well by the occasional "free puffs" they are able to work into them.

### Editors Fair Game

But the most insidious form of propaganda of this kind is that which does not seek to achieve free advertisement for any particular article or movement, but is designed simply to influence a trend of opinion in its favour. This oblique angle of publicity "stunting" is not always quite so easy to detect, and has to be guarded against with special care. A Press agent is often ready with what he considers to be "a good news story"—sometimes it is so—but the ulterior motive is always there. This effort to get free Press publicity tends to become more subtle, and constantly to

change its disguises. In short, editors are fair game for an ever-increasing army of professional and amateur free-publicity seekers, and to safeguard himself and his paper the executive journalist must develop not only a nose for news but a nose also for the "free puff."

It has already been indicated that one of the channels through which attempts are made to secure cheap publicity is the correspondence column. There are other reasons why this feature of the paper has to receive careful attention. A popular tradition has grown up that a newspaper, if it feels inclined to take the trouble, can successfully champion any cause and right any kind of wrong. Like many other traditions, it is based only partly on truth. But because it is so believed, numberless people who have made an apiary of their headgear, or who imagine they have any sort of grievance, are in the habit of writing constantly to the newspapers and demanding action.

Masses of correspondence pour into the offices of the big daily newspapers, but only a small proportion can be used. The trouble is that people who have a grievance, whether it be a personal or a public one, can seldom restrain themselves. If they could only express their complaints moderately, a far greater number of them would receive attention. The residue of usable letters is mostly comment on matters of public interest, and commands space according to the importance of the matter with which the letters deal.

### Letters to the Editor

Office practice varies in the treatment of letters to the editor. With the more popular of the daily newspapers, and particularly with evening newspapers, the rule generally is to deal with letters as with news, i.e. strictly on a reader-interest basis. Letters of unusual interest or special topical appeal are often treated as a news feature, and given a top of column heading to themselves. Some are made the subject

of a follow-up story, with interviews by people who are entitled to contribute authoritative opinions on the matter under discussion. A modern innovation is the practice of giving the main points of letters in half-a-dozen lines. In this way, for instance, *The Times* gives every day in a single column the gist of correspondence which would otherwise require a page.

Letters to the editor can easily be libellous, and this danger has constantly to be watched. Correspondents, especially anonymous correspondents, with a grievance do not care what happens to a newspaper so long as they are allowed to work off their personal spleen.

A correspondence column which is well edited and brightly presented is a most readable feature, and most newspapers now pay more attention to it than formerly. A great number, by the way, have dropped the old-fashioned editorial disclaimer which informed readers that the editor was not responsible for the opinions of his correspondents. As a safeguard against the assumption of legal responsibility, it was not worth the paper on which it was printed. A brief notice indicating a definite space-limit for readers' letters is far more useful and to the point. At least one weekly newspaper has broken new ground by illustrating its correspondence column, and some journals add to the piquancy of the feature by appending an editorial footnote to each letter.

Practice varies in regard to anonymous letters to the editor. Some papers refuse to publish them at all. Others insist on having the name and address of the sender ("not necessarily for publication") as an evidence of good faith. Some people have very good reasons for wishing that their names and addresses shall not be published, and their letters often contain sound and informative comment on matters of public interest. To exclude them is to lose much good matter.

## Editing Correspondence

The accepted methods of dealing with letters to the editor may be summarized as follows—

The context of letters intended to be published under *noms de plume* may be altered at the editor's discretion, providing the sense of the writer's argument is adequately conveyed.

Signed letters should not be altered, except to correct minor faults, without the consent of the writer. Writers are generally amenable to editorial suggestion and guidance, and are ready to agree to emendations in order that letters can be published. Some letters which could not possibly be published in their original form can be rendered innocuous, with the complete retention of their interest, in this way.

Letters which are inaccurate as to questions of fact should not be published. They should be returned to their writers with a letter pointing out the error. Readers prefer private correction by an editor to public correction by other readers.

Subjects suggested by letters to the editor often cause controversy, with a resultant flood of further correspondence. When the subject has sufficient topical interest it is a good plan to take it away from the correspondence column and give it a position of its own as a feature. There should be no place in any correspondence column for letters which are personal, opprobrious, or unfairly critical of any individual, organization, sect, or creed.

## The Editor and Public Life

The editor-in-chief of a big London daily has an exclusive place in the journalistic scheme of things. It is not often that he takes a prominent part in public or social affairs. In the provinces conditions are somewhat different, and editors often take an important share in the public life of their own localities. In this respect it is doubtful whether

the old policy of complete anonymity and perfect detachment from outside interests is the right one in these days. The local newspaper generally has a more intimate contact with its readers than the newspaper of national circulation. It is concerned with a definitely limited area of activity, and within those limits concentration on essentials is a much more simple matter.

### Local Administration

While there is still a distinct cleavage of opinion as to the propriety of newspaper men taking a part in public life, it is apparent that the modern idea is less opposed to the cultivation of outside interests on these lines. Journalism is now well represented in Parliament and in other spheres of equally useful public work. In many parts of the country journalists fill many important offices, as mayors, magistrates, aldermen, town councillors, and members of other local organizations. There are many reasons why they are specially fitted to discharge such functions. Their newspaper training and experience give them a sound knowledge of the routine of local government administration, and they accumulate a store of general information which has a special usefulness in its application to the conduct of public affairs.

A considerable number of provincial newspaper editors fill a variety of useful local offices, and take a prominent part in the social life of their respective districts. There is, indeed, no reason why public and social activity of this kind, providing it is kept reasonably within the bounds of professional propriety, should warrant discouragement. As far as the editor of a small-town newspaper is concerned, there are many ways in which it can prove advantageous. It brings him into contact with the people who matter in the area in which he is interested, and enables him to keep intimately in touch with local interests and the inner workings of local affairs.

## SECTION III WIDER HORIZONS

### CHAPTER XII NEWSPAPER SPECIALIZATIONS

THIS subject needs to be divided. There are the specialisms which modern newspaper organization imposes, and those which the individual journalist imposes upon himself—for one of a hundred reasons.

There is, however, one general principle which should be enunciated. It is that every journalist should have a specialism, and should link it closely to his general scheme of work. It should, if possible, be a practical specialism, and the aim of the worker, having chosen his specialism, should be two-fold. He must assimilate more knowledge about it than anybody else, and he must keep a purposeful eye upon markets. If a specialist comes to regard his special subject purely as a hobby in which the search is all-sufficing, he cannot be a good journalist. A direct contradiction in terms is implied.

Let us consider, first, the specialisms which are imposed upon the modern newspaper worker. They become more formidable as daily their demands increase; they can (if this is allowed) become all-absorbing. The modern newspaper office finds a dozen specialists insufficient for its ordinary needs, though a dozen years ago there were very few of them.

Indeed, it has come to be true that the all-round man who could turn his hand to anything—the most useful man on the pay-roll when our newspapers were growing up—is now only a handy-man. He is still useful, but the tendency in



London, at all events, is to employ him in those tasks which do not seem worth a specialist's while.

### Key Posts

Of course, all key posts on the daily papers are held by specialists, in the strict meaning of the word, but their functions are dealt with separately, and there is no need to refer to them here. We are, in this sense, considering the writing rather than the organizing journalist.

The leader writers, for instance, may, or may not, be specialists. *The Times* leader writers are, but what is universally known as the popular Press, demands not that its leader writers shall be scholars necessarily, but that they shall express the point of view of the paper concerned upon a given topic in a popular way.

Let us deal with the other well-defined specialisms which every metropolitan newspaper, and most of the provincial papers, morning and evening, maintain: sport, the drama, art (to a more limited degree), literature, and gossip. They differ remarkably in the matter of the qualities necessary for their successful practice.

### The Sporting Group

The largest group, numerically, is the sporting, wherein the prime need of the practising journalist is the faculty for quickly gathering facts and correlating them. The sporting journalist must have, or must cultivate, the encyclopædic mind. His public places a higher value upon facts than upon deductions drawn from them. This does not for a moment mean that the racing journalist, for instance, must concentrate on mere collection.

He must be also a prophet, and more than a prophet. But his is a narrow specialism in the sense that there is no room for many of the types of writing prophets, and yet it is a specialism which costs the newspapers a great deal of money,

because it has to be so closely organized and has its news sources so widely spread.

It is the cutting of seconds in the organization of racing journalism which runs away with the money; that, and the fact that the public interested in racing is so very large in this country and, we may quite fairly say, so very critical. There is nothing in the world's journalism to compare with the way in which the racing news services to the evening newspapers, metropolitan and provincial, are organized. The staff work is magnificent.

### Anonymity in Sporting Journalism

In certain other branches of sport the modern tendency has been to employ, for the purposes of meeting the public demand, practitioners of those sports. What these pseudo journalists purvey relates to opinions rather than the facts, and the principle is not a general one. Football and cricket, for example, are to a great extent handled by professional journalists who are anonymous for the most part—though there are exceptions—while lawn tennis is a sporting field in which the player-journalist rather than the journalist-player has his happiest hunting ground.

There is no particular reason why this should be so, except that newspaper executives are excessively imitative, and seem to respond with undue readiness to a not always reasonable demand for "names." The racing public, and the followers of football and cricket, know the pen-names of their favourite critics, but no more about them; in lawn tennis and in golf they demand—or more correctly the existence of the demand is assumed—personal opinions in their news rather than carefully-garnered facts alone.

### Old Assumptions

Among the curiosities of sporting journalism are the contentment of executives with the assumptions of a generation

ago in regard to reader-interest, and the "habits" of particular newspapers in relation to different sports. All newspapers, national or provincial, "feature" racing, cricket, and football, and do it extraordinarily well, but beyond that, in looking at the sporting field, there is a singular absence of unanimity.

Regarded from the standpoint of technical presentation, there is nothing better in daily journalism than the sporting intelligence. There are brainy men engaged upon it in that department which is concerned with presentation, but (this is a purely personal view) one would hesitate to put the quality of the sporting writing as high. It may be that there is no demand for fine writing in a report of a football match or a cricket match—always produced at high speed—but as showing that good humorous writing is appreciated, one cites the golfing articles in *The Times* and the *Morning Post*. Reports of matches cannot be in that class, but other sporting comment written at less speed, can be.

### Literary Criticism

We pass to another specialism, that of the literary critic. It has been the subject of many books, but it may for this purpose be narrowed a good deal. It is certain that the literary public among the readers of any and every journal is infinitesimal compared with the sporting public, but the literary side of every national newspaper and most provincials is in the hands of first-class men, not always journalists in the accepted sense of the term.

There was a time, not so long ago, when the book reviewing was a spare-time job for available staff men, or was "put out" to an unconsidered outside writer. But times have changed. The public was content then to accept the information that particular books were published, and then to form its own judgment in regard to them.

Now, speaking of national newspapers, it is considered

increasingly important that books should be appraised, not by professional journalists, but by highly-skilled critics, and sometimes by popular writers who may, or may not, have specialized in the fields in which they exercise the duty of criticism. There, again, one is driven to the conviction that the assumed public demand may not, in fact, exist, for all forms of specialism are, to-day, excessively imitative.

### Dramatic Criticism

Another specialism in journalism occupying a good deal of public attention is in a state of flux. There, too, the tendency is towards imitation, not, of course, in the matter of literary style, but in regard to general treatment. Anonymity, which is very good for the journalist and for journalism, has given place to the signed criticism in which there is often a strident note. It almost seems that the itch for the spot-light, which we accept as inevitable in the case of those whose work enables the critic to function, has infected the critic as well.

One result of this situation, and of the friction which it produces, is that confusion is caused in the public mind. Theatre-goers do not know how to assess plays of which there are such diverse judgments, and their temptation is to rely upon their own judgment to a greater degree, which may be quite satisfactory to the theatre as an institution, but cannot be good for that branch of journalism which is called dramatic criticism.

It is inevitable that the impact of different minds upon a particular play should produce different reactions, but dramatic criticism should involve a firmer grasp of principles. Condemnation of a play, because it is in a class which an individual critic dislikes or sees no good in, is not dramatic criticism at all; what the public wants to know about a play is whether it is good, bad, or indifferent in its class, and the

same thing, quite roughly, applies to the view of the critic about the players.

### In the Provinces

There is this curiosity about literary and dramatic criticism—grouping them together for the moment—that while the provincial literary criticism is good, dramatic criticism is less distinguished. The explanation is fairly simple. In regard to books, the metropolitan and the provincial writers are exercising judgment upon the same thing. In regard to the theatre, they are not.

The door to these specialist departments is not necessarily closed to the practising journalist, though the tendency is to make them sufficient in themselves instead of a sideline. There are a few journalists—not writers turned journalists, which is what many of the critics are—employed upon dramatic criticism in an incidental way, and all journalists would find it of advantage to interest themselves in the technique of the theatre—it is less important that they should know the current theatrical gossip—because the journalist has the training, if he also has the gift, to become a playwright. At the moment of writing there are several plays in rehearsal written by journalists whose interest in the stage has led them to play-writing. They have, if they need an exemplar, the case of Mr. Bernard Shaw before their eyes. He was an evening newspaper dramatic critic once.

### The International Field

There are many other specialisms available to the journalist. One, tremendously important, concerns the foreign field. The foreign departments of the famous newspapers, staffed by men of wide erudition and ripe judgment, do not bulk largely in the public eye, and the leading practitioners are not known to the man in the street. But they matter

exceedingly, not only to their newspapers but to their governments. Only a few names need be quoted. DeBlowitz, in an earlier generation; Bouchier, Chirol, Wickham Steed, Harold Williams, and E. J. Dillon are and were honoured throughout their profession and outside it.

There is a modern tendency to draw a distinction between what used to be called the all-round man and the specialist, to the disadvantage of the former. In truth, the all-round man is he who has taken the trouble to add to his general equipment the technique of a specialism of some sort; and a better all-rounder still is he who has several of them. As a rule the journalist will find it difficult to choose deliberately the specialism which he will add to his equipment; a sounder plan is to allow his fads (if you like) to guide him. What interests him in the passing show? What subject does he wish to know more about?

These are excellent pointers, but they need to be tested. It is true that any specialism, however recondite, will lead to authority if it is carefully and wisely followed, but for all that, the journalist is wise if he can take up a specialism for which there is a wide public demand.

Affairs in general are an important study for the journalist, whether he is concerned in the building-up of his general equipment, or in search of a specialism which shall be of value to him. The field is illimitable. In foreign affairs, as they used to be called—the international field is a better description—the general body of journalists have not browsed to any great extent, and that is why it can be said that there are no successors to the great names of the last generation.

And yet there is no branch of study open to the journalist, especially the man who is a linguist, likely to be so helpful to him. All mankind wants to know about his neighbours' business now that the whole world is becoming a neighbourhood, and up to the present the matter of instructing us is not in the hands of professional journalists.

Look out across the field of home administration. There, too, are tremendous opportunities which are not being picked up. It is thought by many that there is no hope of "hot" news in this field, and it is for that reason, perhaps, neglected. It is the business of the journalist to be as fully equipped as possible, and his equipment will not be added to by cultivating an attitude of mind towards that which is not "hot" news which is akin to contempt.

### Local Government

Wherefore we suggest that it is well worth the while of the journalist to grasp the implications of the big changes in the business of local government now taking place before our eyes. Ask the next fairly well-equipped journalist you meet what he understands by de-rating; what is its purpose? what are its possible influences upon our own affairs? You may have to put the question to a dozen men before you get an intelligible answer.

To carry the point a little further, consider the other changes in administration involving the transfer of public duty to the larger administrative bodies, and the abolition of those with very limited powers. They are very far-reaching; they have been discussed in Parliament—but not reported at any great length—and have recently come into operation in every district in England.

What does the average journalist know about the plan of it all; about the differences which these changes will make to the average citizen? The national papers do not take the trouble to explain; the provincial dailies regard it as beneath their notice, apparently; and the rest of the Press are studiously reporting what public men in their own localities are saying about the application of its detail; but except in a very limited way, the average journalist—for more of them are at work in the provinces than in London—has not taken the trouble to acquaint himself with these things. And we

suggest that he should, partly in order that his usefulness should be added to, and partly because it is a specialism of great value.

### Risk of Superficiality

It is a commonplace that the journalist should keep abreast of the times. Is the average journalist doing this as well as he can? The man who is making no particular effort in this direction will answer that the daily hurly-burly of meeting the public demand for up-to-the-minute news—and how trivial some of it is—leaves him no time and no mental energy to pursue these other by-ways of knowledge which can be turned into cash and cash opportunities.

The man who consistently makes this answer is in danger of "missing the boat," to use an expressive idiom; he runs the risk of falling into the trap which the superficiality of some of his work has laid for him. The wise journalist, who is giving thought to tendencies—he who is watching the world go round instead of merely going round with it—will see the trap and avoid it.

Alongside this need, especially in the provinces, there is another. It is that the journalist should know all about his own neighbourhood. The metropolitan journalist should not ignore this point; it has an importance for him also. The daily man who knows London really well, in the way that a taxi-driver knows it, is worth a great deal to a news editor in a hurry, because it means that time can be saved that way.

The answer of many journalists to this suggestion is that in the matter of getting about quickly it is better to leave it to the taxi-driver; but there is more in it than that. The taxi-driver knows the names of the streets within his own bailiwick, and the shortest, as well as the longest, way to them, but he may not know, except in the most superficial way, their characteristics.



### “ Know London ”

Every journalist takes a different view of the phrase “to know London.” Efficiency demands that it should be extensive and peculiar, but it is better that the emphasis should be upon the extent of his knowledge rather than its peculiarity. There is no need that the London journalist should have a special knowledge of the haunts of criminals, for it is no part of the sensible journalist’s equipment, but he needs to know enough about them to avoid being made a fool of.

There is no need that he should try to make his brain do the work of the *Post Office Directory* or the *Red Book*, because these sources of knowledge are available to his hand. But it is necessary that he should not waste time in going to places indicated, or in identifying people who are known by sight to the man in the street. The journalist represents the man in the street, and he should have a better knowledge in matters of metropolitan geography than the man in the street has time to amass.

Let him not neglect metropolitan history either. The man who is equipped in this matter is the better qualified for his job, but there, too, he must avoid the temptation to become immersed. There are in London and the provinces many fine journalists who have so great a *flair* for the past in their areas that they do not see all that is visible of the present. It is a matter of proportion.

### Provincial Geography

Let us look for a moment at this aspect of the matter as it affects the provincial journalist. The plain unvarnished truth here is that the man who does not take the trouble to know the geography, the topography, and the history of the area in which he is working, as well as the names and idiosyncrasies of the leading people there resident, is a nuisance to those whom he serves and those among whom he works.

Provincial news editors and chief reporters have this knowledge; it is one of the reasons why they hold the positions they do, and while they are ready and willing to share their knowledge, they expect at the same time that the man working under their direction shall acquire it for himself as quickly as he can.

Wherefore it is recommended that the most useful specialism of all, looking at this matter from the standpoint of the provincial journalist, is to know all that can be known of local conditions. Thus will he be able to accomplish a given amount of work in less time; thus will the fountains of news be always available to him; thus will he avoid making unnecessary enemies; thus will he be equipped for the jobs of those who, in his early years, direct his goings out and his comings in.

### “Local” Knowledge Scorned

We do not know whether our experience in this matter has been typical, but we seem to have come across a high proportion of journalists who were scornful of what may conveniently be called “local” knowledge. Such have seemed to imply that to be interested in any way in their locality was to admit the possession of a parochial mind. In these cases there was also in general an absence of any detailed knowledge of affairs, and it is not unlikely that less success than was possible has come to such as these.

They could not have thought enough about the matter of equipment. They must have forgotten, unless they never realized it, that the journalist is the historian of the passing moment, and that he could not tackle his job properly unless he had in his mind a comprehensive background of historical knowledge, general and local. How often have we heard it said by the smartish journalist of the younger sort: “We are not concerned with the dry bones of history; our business is with the present.” It sounds good, but how superficial! How

is it possible to interpret present happenings if the knowledge of causes is held in contempt?

It seems a little elementary to be insisting upon this point, but it is a matter of experience that insufficient attention is being paid, and we suggest that, properly regarded, it is a specialism of the most useful sort. How, then, can knowledge along these lines be acquired for future use? It is a simple matter.

The provincial journalist will, if he is a wise man, direct his private reading to this end. Every county has its history; a ponderous affair in half-a-dozen volumes possibly, but invariably meticulously done and of inestimable value to the journalist, always provided that he uses it with due regard to the copyright laws and the principles of fair dealing.

Apart from that, however, there are in every town local histories of an authoritative sort, quite often written by journalists—we could mention a score of instances—and in most centres there is available an ordered bibliography from which the student may pick and choose, according to his inclinations. There is at least one man in every office who has realized the importance of this specialism, and he will generally be delighted to discover a pupil and to aid him in his search.

### A Background

And apart from its utilitarian side, the search is so well worth while for its own sake. Thus you may find a background for writing other than that which comes under the head of journalism; thus will your general equipment be improved; thus may you store your mind with the ways of thought of more gracious ages, and so will you equip your faculties to the absorption of knowledge.

But there is one aspect of this matter which must not be forgotten. It is one thing to browse aimlessly in the glowing

fields of your town or county story as spread before you by the scholars, or in the fields of your own paper of a generation before; it is another to turn that knowledge into the clay and straw of which your journalistic bricks are fashioned. Be orderly, therefore, in your reading. The sources of knowledge are important, and cannot be trusted to memory. Every journalist should have a filing system of his own, but he should think long and carefully before deciding upon what system he should file, and having done that, he should stick to his system.

### Not Memory Alone

There are in every newspaper office men who rely almost wholly upon wonderfully retentive memories; they are an asset everywhere, but the moment comes, sooner or later, when memory plays tricks with them, and the unhappy fact is that when memory fails it is always on an important rather than an unimportant occasion. The young journalist should get into the way in his youth of keeping records of the sources of knowledge. If he tries to do more than this, and tabulates knowledge of a local sort, he will be snowed under in a little while, and will unfit himself for the urgencies of his daily task. To put the point briefly, every journalist must beware lest he should allow his specialism to ride him.

### The Gallery

Though the Gallery of the House of Commons has a literature of its own, it is suitable to include in such a book as this some reference to an institution which, in certain respects, has no counterpart in the world. Lifted above the arena of politics, it lives a curiously detached life of its own, full of colour, of movement, full of happiness and hard work. It has been described as a club; it is, but it is much more. It is the nerve-centre of Parliament. The faithful Commons would cease to have significance in the life of the nation

were the functions of those who sit above for the purpose of recording their doings removed.

The Gallery has had its ups and downs from those distant days when Dr. Johnson recorded the doings of Parliament more or less surreptitiously, taking care not to let the Whig dogs have the best of it, "until this present" when the rooms behind the Gallery are equipped with tape machines, telephones, club amenities of the best, and a spirit of fellowship which cannot be reproduced anywhere else in England. It has been said that the great days of the Gallery are over, that since Parliamentary affairs do not occupy the minds of the people as they used, the attraction of the Gallery to journalists is less than it was.

### The Public Taste

There is a misconception behind all this. It is a matter of the yard-stick method of assessing Parliament. When the "penny dailies" of the almost forgotten days reported the proceedings of the Lords and Commons in full, they were compelled to maintain a large staff there. But the Gallery is just as full as ever it was; just as busy; just as important. Public taste has changed, that is all. The demand for the precise word, as spoken on the floor of the House, has disappeared, but people want to know—and much more quickly—what happened in the Commons, and just how it happened, and what led up to it, and what are its implications.

The old hands of the Gallery—the generation which has no representatives there now—were not concerned with the background of events or their implications. They wrote what they heard in all its sometimes tiresome detail. And, of course, on the big occasion they do it still. The fact that nobody can foretell the big occasion means that newspapers must be always alert.

But it has also come to mean that the Lobby man and

the sketch writer have a more definite niche; that the link between the floor of the House and the Gallery is much stronger than it used to be. Newspaper representatives are not "strangers," in the old unhappy sense that it was possible under the rules of the House to have them removed; they are welcome servants of the State, and the relationship between them and Members is of the closest and happiest.

Members of Parliament know that information given under seal, as it were, to leading representatives of the papers on the floor of the Lobby, is as safe as if placed in a bank strong-room, and Lobby men are studiously careful to see that this confidential relationship is maintained for everybody's sake.

### Triviality Gone

Wherefore it may be said that while fewer and fewer papers report the whole of Parliament, all of them watch it, through their own men, or through the eyes of agency representatives. All that has happened is that the record of triviality has disappeared, and it is also the case that the provincial newspapers pay more attention to the proceedings than ever they did.

A noteworthy characteristic of the post-war years is that nearly every newspaper has arrangements for keeping itself informed of the activities of Members within its area. Sometimes the Members themselves are willing to help in this matter, but apart from that, there is a considerable body of journalists in and about Parliament who have, in recent times, taken up this branch of journalism to their profit and to the advantage of the people, who thus feel, as they never did before, that they are in touch with those sent to Westminster to represent them.

## CHAPTER XIII

### TRADE JOURNALISM

TRADE journalism has its secrets, but they may be learned by the all-round journalist who looks upon trade journalism as a sideline, leading sometimes to more lucrative posts than those in daily or weekly service. All over the country there are men serving the ordinary newspapers, who, by learning all that is possible about the trade which is established on their doorsteps, are able materially to add to their incomes.

But it is implicit in this that they should really understand the trade which interests them. Merely knowing the leading figures in a particular field will not be enough. It may not, indeed, be necessary that the trade journalist who is supplying the trade papers as a sideline with the news which comes under his eye, should have a scientific understanding of manufacturing processes, but he must know what, in that trade, is News, spelt with a capital, and what is "tosh," that is to say, perfectly familiar to every tyro in that trade. In other words, he must take his trade journalism seriously, even if it is only a sideline.

There are many trades whose periodical services are met only by those who know the trades concerned intimately. Thus, there are half a hundred branches of industry served upon their periodical Press by men who are practitioners in that field, and are journalists secondarily. There are no rules in this matter. An engineer who can write may become a journalist who writes with authority; and there are many journalists, interested in a particular branch of engineering, who have taken the pains to become so expert that their measure of authority is no less. And so it is with every other

branch of industry. It sometimes happens that a man who enters journalism through its larger door of the daily or weekly Press, drifts by chance into close association with the industry which predominates in his district.

### The Sub-division

There are journalists, for example, in the heavy woollen districts who know enough about this business to be regarded as authorities, and so it must be in other trades. The trade papers are, in many instances, run by people who have graduated in the practical workshops of the trade they serve, but this is not invariable. So much depends upon the trade or profession, and there is a sub-division to be noticed here in the distinction between the strictly trade papers and those which may be called class papers.

The relation between a trade paper and its readers differs a good deal from the relation to its clientele of the newspaper or periodical. It is more confidential and personal. Indeed, there is a good deal of matter, news to a particular trade, which it is not desirable should be available to other trades and to the public—that is, from the point of view of the personnel of those trades. And for that reason quite a number of papers are not on sale in the ordinary way, but are only available at subscription rates to individuals in the trade concerned.

It is implied that journalism on trade papers involves a specialized knowledge which is not available to the ordinary journalist, and recruitment to this class is inevitably limited by the circumstance that what a man learns while engaged on one paper is not of very great service to him except upon a paper in the same trade, or group of trades. Still, the trade Press offers important opportunities to journalists, and as the number of trade and class papers is increasing very rapidly indeed, these opportunities must increase in number.



### A Resilient Mind

It is impossible to generalize concerning the equipment needed by a man who desires to spend his journalistic days on the trade Press. Each group needs special knowledge which can only be learned from the inside or from the practice of a particular trade, but it is the attribute of the properly-equipped journalist that he can quickly adapt himself. Given a resilient mind, the willingness to learn a new technique, and the gift for getting down to brass tacks, the journalist who looks to the trade Press (grouping this section together for the moment) is likely to make good if he is a good journalist. That must count in the long run.

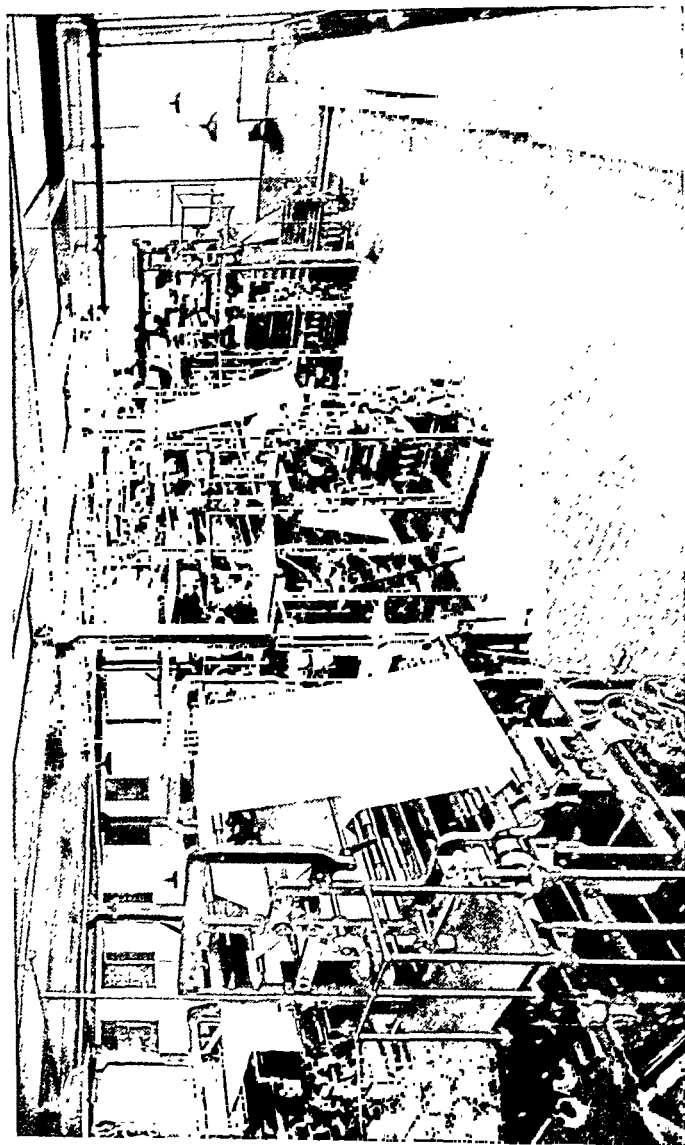
But there is one temptation to the journalist occupied upon the general Press which he must especially eschew if he passes to any form of specialism in the sense indicated. He must beware of superficiality. When he adventures into any technology, the ordinary journalist has to remember that his first business is to make his story interesting to people who know nothing about it, and possibly care less.

The trade journalist must keep the fact in the front of his mind that he is addressing people who know a great deal more about his specialism in its detail than he does; therefore bright superficialities will not do. Along those lines he is just wasting his time, and there is no doubt at all that he will be so informed before many days are past.

### An Illustration

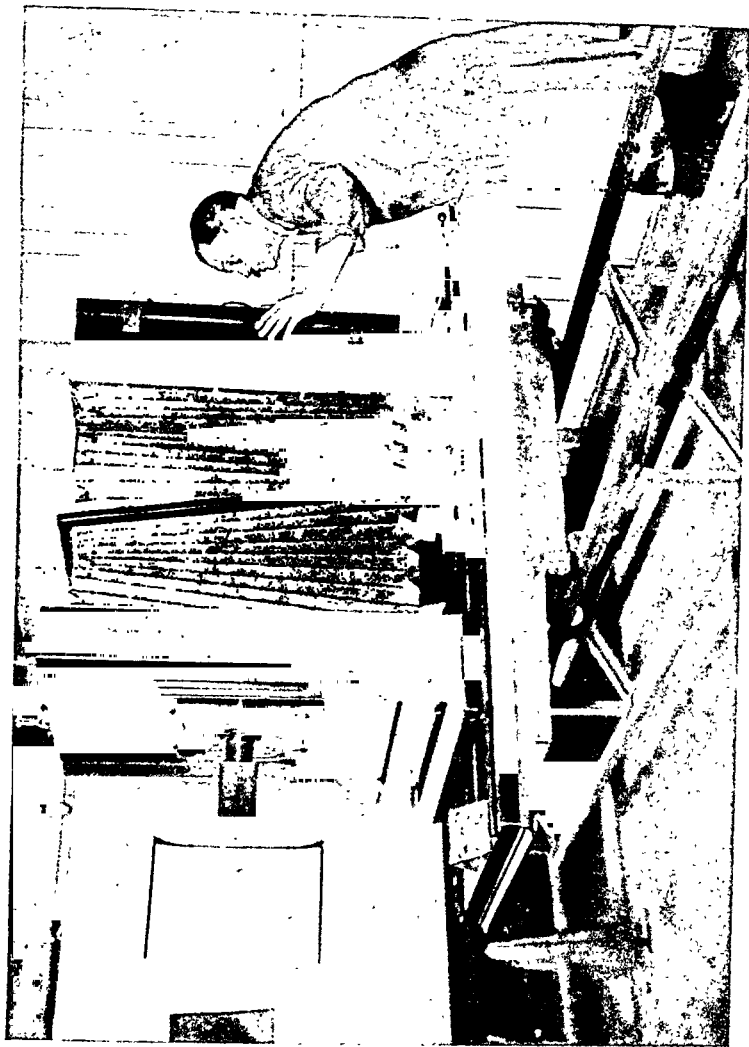
The writer recalls an experience of his very early days of pupilage which served to impress this really vital difference of outlook. His experience, in addition to being brief, had been wholly concerned with daily journalism wherein brevity and brightness were the first, or at least a very important, consideration.

In an emergency he was called in to assist in the preparation of the very full report of a trade congress needed by a



A TYPICAL PRESS ROOM

Some well-planned and spacious Press Rooms are to be found in provincial newspaper offices.  
Here is a good example.



### IN THE PROCESS ROOM

One of the large cameras used for the making of illustrations.

trade paper. The job was in charge of a man who is now a very prominent public figure, and when he noticed that the writer's pencil was not flying—it was a desperately dull patch—he leaned forward and insisted very firmly that he needed every word. It was a lesson of some value.

### The Thrill of the Hunt

It is not our concern to present comparisons between trade journalism and that which is roughly called general, from the point of view of attractiveness, nor would such comparisons be of value. There are journalists who insist that the thrill of the hunt for that which goes to the making of contemporary history, is all that there is by way of recompense for its discomforts; that it is better to wear out than rust out, and so on.

And in like manner, there are journalists who urge that this is a specious argument; that there is peace as well as hard work in the backwater, as the daily journalist would call it, of the trade Press. There is some truth on both sides. There are moments in the life of the daily journalist when he tires of the high lights, when the speed of the wheel on which he is a very butterfly sickens him; and there are times in the life of the trade journalist when it seems that he is in a rut. These are questions of temperament. Decisions which affect the bent of a man's mind must not be settled on a temperamental basis.

### Motoring Specialization

A speciality for journalists which has provided a good deal of scope of recent years, is motoring, which is likely to provide even more in the future, so rapidly is it developing. Most of the London newspapers have a motoring editor, or a special motoring correspondent, and many of the provincial newspapers also make motoring articles a feature. Motoring is not only a matter of great news interest to an ever-growing

body of readers, but it also represents a highly valuable advertisement interest. The motor manufacturers and dealers spend very large sums in Press advertising every year.

In this connection many newspapers make a practice of publishing reports on test runs of new cars by their own motoring editors. The young journalist who has an interest in motor-cars, and takes the trouble to keep in touch with technical developments, may find a useful opportunity in this direction for specializing on congenial lines. Journalists who pay special attention to motoring on the more important newspapers have unusual opportunities of becoming familiar with the innumerable makes of cars, and their work is greatly assisted by the close liaison which the manufacturers—ever mindful of the value of Press publicity—maintain with them.

## CHAPTER XIV

### JOURNALISM FOR WOMEN

It would have been a natural supposition that when the professions opened their doors—or had them forced—to women, as they did after the war, journalism would have recruited from this source to a greater degree than the other professions. Figures are elusive, but there is no very obvious evidence that this is so. It has been stated that in one of the learned professions there are already too many women; that there are not enough posts for them in the special fields in which the sex has worked for years, and that they are not to any degree filling men's jobs.

But journalism is an open profession. There is no sex bar at all. And yet there has been no great rush of women into this open profession during the last few years. There are more than there were, of course, in every branch, but not so many as were expected. That is not to say that there are not more women in the offices of the newspapers and the periodical Press. They are an infinitely greater company, but only a tithe of them are journalists, whatever they may call themselves.

Most of them are fulfilling secretarial posts which may, in some cases and at length, qualify them for executive posts on specialist papers, and it is true also that the educational standard of such women is high; as high, at least, as that of the young entry on the male side.

#### Rough and Tumble

Let us look at this matter one section at a time. A generation ago there were women engaged in the ordinary rough and tumble of daily journalism, on the daily papers. They took their turns with the men, specializing to some degree,

of course, and they were known to their generation as journalists who had overcome the prejudice which at one time existed.

The proportion of their numbers is probably no higher to-day, in spite of the fact that there are more women in all the professions. There may be two women in offices where there was only one a generation ago, but the male staffs have in many cases doubled in numbers, so that the proportion remains.

Upon the provincial Press it is much the same. There were women in provincial journalism, in the sense that they were holding staff jobs, during the war, and the expectation was that they would remain. But they have not done so in anything like the anticipated numbers. In that section the reasons are a little plainer.

### In the Provinces

Work especially suitable for women may exist in sufficient volume on a London paper, but it does not exist in that volume on the average provincial journal, whether daily or weekly, and it has to be admitted that in the provinces, where the journalist is much less a specialist and usually a general practitioner, there are reasons why women's opportunities are limited.

Nobody, in these days, would insult women by saying that they were physically incapable of the strain of work in a profession admittedly exacting, but it is the fact, as most practical people will allow, that there is a very great deal in the ordinary routine of journalism (in its provincial aspects) for which women have not the necessary equipment. Part of it, of course, is just prejudice, but that does not explain it in every case.

The journalist whose functions include the planning of work for staffs knows perfectly well that in the day's round there are many jobs to which he cannot, without mental

discomfort, send a woman, however willing she may be to take the rough with the smooth.

### In the Courts

There is, for example, no logical reason why in Courts in which women sit as magistrates, women should not also sit as reporters, and in some cases they do so sit, but it is not a matter of general practice, and there are no signs that it will ever be common.

The Courts represent an extreme case, but numerous others will occur to the practical mind, of inquiries which a woman ought not to be required to make, of places to which she ought not to be required to go. Prejudice apart, the male journalist who refuses to permit women under his charge to associate with unpleasantness in any form, is not necessarily a prejudiced person; he is, in most cases, applying a standard which he would apply to his own daughter.

That is but a single aspect of the case, and we realize that, logically, there is nothing to be said for it. Women magistrates, women doctors, women lawyers, women social workers, have tasks of even greater unpleasantness to perform, and they carry them out without thinking about them except as matters of business. But all these are, in one sense of the term, free agents. Their tasks are not laid upon them except by their own consciences; they are not under the direction of men with, perhaps, unreasoning prejudices.

All this may seem pettifogging, but the point it is desired to make is that on the newspaper Press the control of these matters is in the hands of men, sometimes of men who belong to a generation which held its opinions on these matters strongly.

### More Women than Men

Alongside this set of facts may be ranged others which point the other way. It is a fact that the courses of the



universities are taken up by more women than men in the matter of actual numbers, and that may also be true of the work of the proprietary schools of journalism. There is, moreover, justification for this condition of things. The most casual observer is aware that the last ten years have seen the birth of dozens of periodicals especially catering for women, and run by women blessed with the highest degree of professional skill and enthusiasm.

Gone are the days when the women's feature and the children's corner were fashioned by the kind of men one used to see in the humorous papers, who functioned only with the scissors. It is probable that they never existed at all, but it is the fact that these matters are scientifically handled by scientifically trained women, and that there are very few men, if there are any, who could do these jobs a quarter as well. The university courses and the schools have had a hand in this change of the last ten years, and there, of course, the recruitment of women has been going on steadily, and the profession has been enriched by their coming.

Moreover, on the daily and provincial Press, work of this character is being done by trained women along the same lines, and it is marked by the same high standard of efficiency. It is a commonplace of modern journalism that the newspaper must be complete in itself; that it must contain, in addition to news and comment on passing events, and, increasingly, comment on people and their ways of living as well as their ways of thought, detail of the more intimate interests of readers.

### The Open Door

A man does not expect or require that his newspaper should instruct him concerning his clothing, or how to run his business, but the woman reader is prepared to accept helpful advice under this head in large quantities.

Naturally, the attempt is universally made to meet the

demand, and since it must be properly met, there is an ever-growing field for the employment of women journalists; ever-widening opportunities for the use of their special talents. To be really of value to the woman journalist, this book ought to indicate in what way the door may be opened to the person who, knowing something about clothes, for instance, can spread the knowledge by writing about them or drawing her ideas.

The plain truth about this matter is that there is no well-trodden road at all. The door is really wide open to ideas, for there are editors in London and most of the big towns who are always looking for women who can express themselves adequately in line, who can, in a word, draw understandably and interestingly.

### Only One Way

There is only one way to find these opportunities, and that is to keep on trying with drawings which explain themselves, and with accompanying descriptions which even a man can understand. Women journalists in staff jobs are more successful when they specialize in women's interests than when they take their part in the ordinary rough-and-tumble of staff work.

There are big chances here for the woman with the out-of-the-ordinary gift and untold pertinacity in finding a market for it. The qualities necessary, apart from the technical gift, are perseverance, perseverance, and perseverance.

Success comes to women journalists sometimes in another way. They are able, maybe, to make some sort of a name as novelists. That is a golden key to open editorial doors. There are many women novelists who make large additional incomes from journalism, not of necessity because they are good journalists, but because they have names which "sell." One or two examples occur to the mind in which the work of such women is worthy of the honour in which it is held,

There are a few gifted women who have found their real *métier* as journalists after having won a public as writers of fiction. They are to be envied as well as congratulated, for having won fame they may write more or less what they like. The average journalist, man or woman, cannot always please himself or herself, which is good in some ways but not so good in others.

## CHAPTER XV

### FREE-LANCE JOURNALISM

FREE-LANCE journalism can, if it needs a definition, be described as anything between the work of a former Cabinet Minister who spends the years out of office in offering his views on men and things for very considerable fees, and the hopeful youth in a small town who, hearing of a fire, runs into the office of the local newspaper with the information in the hope of reward, and, perhaps, of an offer of further work.

Between those wide extremes there are thousands of writers, very many of whom cannot be described as journalists at all since they have not the root of the matter in them, who regard writing as an agreeable way of adding to their incomes.

It is probably true to say, however, that the outflow from the ranks of free-lance journalists each year equals the inflow. A new generation of writers arises each year, but the disappointments of those who have been aimlessly trying to enter the ranks of journalists by a door which opens very grudgingly, are such that hundreds gradually drop out.

It is not the purpose of this book to show the untrained, or partly trained and hopeful writer, how he may succeed in this overcrowded field; there is a literature on the subject which is growing every year. Rather is it intended to survey the field and to show what is happening in it.

#### Ex-Prime Ministers as Journalists

It has been said and never contradicted, as far as we know, that a former member of the Government earned, while out of office, for his writings in the newspapers and magazines of another country, a total of £20,000 in a single year; another, a journalist in this case, one who earned his living in the

profession through his politics, and rose finally to the office of Prime Minister of Britain, once said that all his holidays abroad, and he was a great traveller, had been paid for by his writings.

So common was the practice for highly-placed figures in political life to supplement their incomes in this way, that it was ordained by the Prime Minister of the day not many years ago, that the practice of writing for the Press while holding ministerial office must cease, and that obligation has been strictly observed since.

There are many famous writers, too, who have in these last few years widened their scope and added to their public by casual writing in the newspaper and periodical Press, apart, of course, from their short-story writing for the magazines. Many of them have in this sense specialized in book reviewing, to their own considerable financial benefit and, it must be admitted to the advantage of the newspapers making use of their work.

Literary criticism is not, of course, a matter of free-lance effort in the general sense of the term; it is a distinct branch of the profession of letters, but the literary criticism of authors who have been employed chiefly because they were famous and not necessarily—though sometimes they have the qualification—because they were instructed critics, is free-lance journalism in essence.

### A Changing Field

The field of the free-lance journalist is ever changing. A generation ago a journalist whose name was unknown except in newspaper offices which he served, could, and did, make a considerable income by the provision of news which could more cheaply be collected that way than by any other. It was said that when the late Sir Henry Lucy left his provincial home for London to work in the Gallery, he was able to dispose of his connection for a considerable sum.

The school in which he graduated professionally was that in which many fine journalists have been trained, the small provincial newspapers, and his link with the wider journalism in London consisted in the provision of the news of his area, well-written, imaginatively presented, and assiduously sought.

In every provincial town there are still men whose professional activity consists in meeting the need of London papers for their provincial news, and there are plenty of them who are able to maintain themselves in comfort without the standby of a staff job. But it is only possible for a very well-equipped journalist to do this; it involves constant attention to detail; keenness in seeking out opportunities, and staff work of the soundest.

In the days of the intense rivalry of the old-established newspapers in London, the representation of one of them in a large town was a connection worth holding. The development of the agencies has altered the situation a good deal, though in this matter, of course, there is good and profitable work to be done by free-lance writers. And to a greater extent than ever before the free-lance has opportunities of specializing of which, one cannot help observing, he is making full use.

### Competition Increasing

It is increasingly competitive in other ways. The professional free-lance journalist, whether he is working in London or in the provinces, has to meet to a greater extent than ever before, the competition of the writer who has a trade, technical or professional equipment, and who looks upon free-lance journalism as a profitable sideline. The whole matter of news supply for the newspapers, and specialized copy for the periodical Press, is so loosely organized that it is impossible to lay down a formula. Moreover, there are so many technologies of which the professional

journalist has only a smattering of knowledge, that it is difficult for him to compete with the technical man who can write and can correctly appreciate the market.

The chief condition necessary to success, indeed, boils down to an understanding of the market, plus, of course, the stern determination to know more about a given subject than is known to the public which the free-lance seeks to address. The free-lance journalist must specialize until the day comes, if it ever does, that he is sufficiently famous for editors to want his opinions on men and things for the reason that he has a name. Even that has happened to many who started as free-lance journalists.

There are some real romances in the careers of journalists who, so to speak, drifted into their profession from the outside; who became free-lance journalists because they could not help writing, or quite often because they hated the other jobs into which chance had placed them.

Most of them did not follow any particular rule. Their upward path was strewn with disappointments. They were like prospectors in likely soil waiting for a lucky strike. Some of them, also like prospectors, did not know their luck when they had found it. To pursue the analogy a little further, they were not content with "pay" gold; they wanted to reach the big vein—and sometimes they failed to find it.

It is a "chance" business, but there is a lot of fun in it, so much that there are plenty of cases of men who have forsaken the comparative security of staff work for its excitements, just as there are men who have thrown up executive posts for the thrill of the search for news.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE JOURNALIST AND HIS WORLD

THE public have more wrong ideas about the life that the journalist lives and the environment that is his than about any other class of professional person. The reasons for this are quite understandable. There is an inevitable want of definition about the professional boundaries of the journalist which does not apply to the closed professions. Moreover, the journalist does so much of his work in the full gaze of the public, and the results are available for all the world to see.

With the commonest misunderstanding, that the life of the journalist has a glamour about it which is not the mark of other professions, we need not concern ourselves. It has not the slightest importance. Like every other profession, it has its high-lights and its shadows; its special thrills and its arid patches.

It is, in a word, what the journalist makes of it. If the need to express himself in this particular medium is built into the stuff of his character—for if journalists are made and not born, some have a greater affinity for it than others—he will be a happy man, and happiest when working hardest. If, on the other hand, he is pitchforked into it, as sometimes happens, or drifts into the profession without fully understanding its obligations, public and private, he will find a great deal that is irksome in its practice. But that, of course, is true of all the work of the world.

The curious thing is that whilst journalism holds its practitioners so closely to itself, and to many journalists it is inconceivable that they should ever be anything else, there is a constant drift out of the profession into others, just as there is a constant, and perhaps a growing, drift into it from



the outside. And in regard to the outward drift it is not implicit that the men who go are those who have either failed to make good or have failed to find happiness. There are numerous instances to the contrary.

### The Outward Drift

Of the outward drift all that need be said, ignoring for the moment the misfits, those who have gone out for the plain and simple reason that they are not happy inside it, is that very many who have cast journalism aside have been the better equipped for the new tasks which they have taken up.

It follows that men who have had, as part of their natural equipment, to make quick decisions, to exercise a careful judgment, to handle men either singly or in the mass, but always with tact, must have within them the seeds of success in walks of life which, so to speak, run parallel.

There are countless opportunities outside journalism for the journalist. We propose to deal with some of them. There are throughout the country, but chiefly with metropolitan headquarters, societies and organizations and federations of every imaginable kind. It is part of the British genius to federate like interests for the good of the whole. It may be that in some departments of our national life we have overdone it. It is at least conceivable that there is overlapping, but with this we are not concerned.

The point it is desired to make is that a large number of these organizations, dealing with matters of uplift, with professional and industrial organizations, with the semi-public services, and with technologies of every sort, have recruited to their organizations journalists possessed of those gifts of diplomacy which have been mentioned.

The well-equipped journalist makes an admirable official for any group of people concerned with the presentation of a public interest, whether its business is to watch the course

of legislation, or to concern itself with the creation of a body of public opinion. We have made a point through these chapters of not mentioning the names of examples, but if it were politic they could be given by the score.

### Stepping-stones

One would not say that in matters of this sort members of the profession have used their journalistic training as stepping-stones to other public and semi-public posts. Rather have they seized opportunities as they have flitted past. But in regard to one other field in which many journalists have won distinction, it would not be incorrect to say that the profession of letters was used in this way, not improperly, but as a means to a greater proficiency in a new profession.

The Bar has always attracted journalists, and many men of the highest distinction have passed through the fires of newspaper practice to the greater serenity of practice in the Courts, and in many cases to the Bench. Every journalist knows the names of two illustrious judges who graduated in this way.

### The Bar and the Press

The attraction is easy to understand, moreover. It is not every journalist who has the opportunity of seeing advocacy at close quarters, but it is an experience of all journalists who were trained in the provinces, and of many metropolitan practitioners whose work has lain in the Courts, a well-recognized specialism.

The system works in two ways. Some members of the Bar learned the beginnings of their law as reporters; others having qualified for the Bar first have improved the time of waiting for briefs by specialized reporting of causes for which there is demand. In both cases the transition is natural and smooth, since one form of practice helps the other. Thus, the man who has reported in Courts in which

the procedure is complex, finds procedure problems quite simple in those cases in which he passes from the reporter's desk to a seat at the Bar. In like manner, the barrister-reporter quickly learns to express himself as clearly in speech as he has to do in writing.

There are numerous instances of the operation of another principle, by which men who have practised the profession of journalism for years have read for the Bar in middle age, in order to enter some specialized section of the law to which they have been led in their newspaper experience. The ebb and flow between the professions cannot be described as large, but it is constant.

### Publicity

Publicity has in the post-war years become a profession. It may be described as closely akin to advertising, but it is not the same thing. As it stands in close relationship also to journalism and newspaper practice in general, it is perfectly natural that it should provide journalists with opportunities of using their talents outside the real borders of their profession.

The parent of publicity in its post-war connotation was war propaganda. It is not for a moment suggested that there is any similarity of aim, for not all the war propaganda was good either in conception or in its result.

But it is a fact that during the war we became accustomed to the public presentation of a point of view—sometimes only of information leading to a particular standpoint—as to which it was politic that people should be better informed. And so, following a path perfectly familiar to those who have studied our national mentality, we improvised an engine of war, and later turned it, adapted, and on the whole improved, to the purposes of peace.

One searches in vain for an adequate definition of publicity as it is understood by the public, and as it is regarded

by the newspaper industry. In the widest sense of the word it includes all advertising, but in the sense here indicated it is not at all the same thing.

The advertiser has a clear-cut relation to the newspaper. It is the machinery he must use, or at least it is part of the machinery by which he tells the world what he is doing for their and his own good. Publicity is an auxiliary to advertising, but it is quite distinct, and because its relation to newspapers, and incidentally to journalists, has not yet been defined, it is difficult to indicate its limits, if indeed, it has any limits.

The time may come when it will be necessary to create a working understanding between the new profession of publicity and the other interests with which it is connected, but as we are not concerned with the ethics of this matter, nor with its commercial aspect, there is no need to say more upon this point than this: that it would be a desirable thing that there should be some basis of understanding, and that it should be arrived at quickly.

### Other Opportunities

We are more particularly concerned in this chapter to indicate the opportunity which the new profession offers to journalists who feel that they have gifts of which it can make use. Let the working of the business be illustrated by examples. An industry—a shipping company, for instance—desires quite naturally, to develop the will to travel. It is a legitimate part of its business. Attractive literature, newspaper advertising—penny plain and twopence coloured—lantern-slides, lectures, information bureaux, are some of the means it quite properly uses to this end.

In using these aids it is, indeed, performing a public service in breaking down national insularity. It has been realized, however, that even in an island kingdom there are thousands of people who have never seen a ship, and many

thousands more to whom a ship is a thing of wonder. Naturally, only a proportion of these people are potential ocean travellers, but nobody knows what the proportion is. That is one stage of the working of the new business psychology.

This will to travel has been built up consciously by publicity, though aided by the cheapening of it—this is a matter of ordinary competition—and by other considerations, and upon it has to be superimposed the desire to travel by particular routes and in the ships of a particular company.

Competition cannot do it unaided: there is an economic limit in these matters. Wherefore this imaginary shipping company—it is not only one company, of course—uses the method, again quite legitimately, of stimulating public familiarity with its name and its purposes by presenting its name in news paragraphs concerning the movements of people in whom the public manifests an interest.

It works this way. A news paragraph may appear in a newspaper stating that So-and-so has returned to England. That may be interesting to So-and-so's friends, and to the curious public, but if the same news paragraph can be so phrased that it stated that So-and-so returned to England by a particular ship it has a publicity value to the shipowners.

It is part of the business of the publicity agents of the shipping companies to see that this definite information gets into the papers as often as possible, and as it has been found as a matter of experience that publicity agents who have been journalists have a higher proportion of success in this respect than those who have graduated in another school, it is recognized as sound business to employ a journalist for this work.

### A New Angle

This is but a single example, but it is referred to in some detail as showing the operation of a comparatively new principle in publicity and a new avenue of employment for

journalists. Many industries federated in their general interests find it is a necessary part of their organization to have a Press department, which is not necessarily concerned with advertising but which seeks to interest the public by the provision of news and informative matter with an angle likely to be favourable to them.

There are critics who suggest that this is a method of getting advertising space on the cheap, but it is also the fact that many very well-known journalists are practising this form of specialism, and justify it on the ground that there is no basis of misunderstanding on the part of the newspapers. Editors who receive matter of this description, are not deceived, it is suggested. If they use it, they use it on its merits—appreciating its purpose, but recognizing also that it may contain something likely to interest the public.

The time may come, if it has not arrived already, when it will be necessary to reduce the business to a system, and it may be arguable whether expenditure of this sort has an economic basis in every case.

### Possibility of Waste—A Special Sphere

The point is that the well-equipped journalist is likely to make a success of it, whereas an untrained mind can waste a great deal of time and money at it through not knowing anything about the newspaper organization and the mentality of newspaper executives.

Speaking from the experience which comes of half-filling a wastepaper basket daily with matter which comes in this form from publicity agents, one can at least say that it has become a very big business, and it is possible to go further and to admit that the professional touch is constantly recognizable, even when no name is attached.

In modern practice there is no attempt at evasion. The reputable practitioners make no attempt to secure payment for Press matter which has a publicity origin, and it quite

frequently happens that the matter they send out is used on its merits in newspapers of every class.

Closely allied to opportunities for extra service of this sort are those which deal in a more general way with the central organization of professional or industrial interests, and with the federations of numerous bodies which find it advantageous to have a central pool of ideas. Journalists are finding it increasingly possible to hold such posts as secretaries of their bodies with success, and for the reason very often that they are able to deal with the publicity as well as the other problems of the employing body.

Charitable organizations needing publicity, which means all of them, find that a journalist on the staff, if not actually directing their operations, can, by reason of his specialized knowledge of newspapers and of people, direct their efforts to greater purpose.

### **The Best Qualified Man**

There is no way in which these openings can be made known to those who seek to use their talents outside their chosen profession other than the ordinary channels of the newspapers, save, of course, the chance of a friend in authority. The general principle may be stated with confidence that, other things being equal, the journalist is the best qualified professional man for organizing duties, for the reason that he knows his way about, that he has learned the uses of diplomacy, and can, as a rule, present a given case with skill, whether the medium be in speech or writing.

### **Journalists and Advertising**

Although advertising is so closely allied to journalism, the ebb and flow between the two professions is not large. Journalists occasionally cross the line, the invisible line, which divides them, and it is not unlikely that there will be an increase of this movement. There is the well-known case

of a man who, holding a high executive post upon the staff of a London evening newspaper, passed thence to the advertising managership of a morning paper with great success.

It boils down really to the necessary executive capacity in a man. The journalist may have executive gifts, the capacity to handle men and problems, or he may have concentrated upon describing what he has seen and what he has thought about. No longer is it true that the true journalist is he who spends his days or his nights (or both) in writing. Many of the ablest journalists rarely write anything.

There is constant argument in the newspaper and advertising clubs as to whether the gifts required in one branch of a common profession are the sort of qualities which make for success in the other. Can a journalist write advertising copy which has both pull and point? Some can, of course. The stock-in-trade of a journalist consists in the last resort of a few thousands of words, which, by the alchemy of his thinking, he can arrange in impressive or provocative order. The business of the advertising man, reduced to its elements, is pretty much the same. With both the need is conviction and the capacity to catch the attention (and hold it) of the man or woman in a hurry.

### Too Imitative

If, for once, a personal opinion may be ventured, both journalism, in its relation particularly to the presentation of the news and views of the day, and advertising, are far too imitative. That comment needs to be qualified. It would be pretentious and absurd to suggest that a good idea should be only used once, whether as a news feature or the point of an advertisement, but it is suggested quite mildly, that the public is liable to draw the wrong conclusions from the degree of copying which prevails in the news and advertising columns of the Press.



Those who practise it sometimes forget that a fierce light beats upon all that journalists and advertising experts do. Their work may or may not live after them, but it is certain that he who imitates too pointedly loses a great deal of the effect sought after.

All this is a little beside the point, though this is the stage at which it may appropriately be stressed, because it concerns both branches of the newspaper industry.

### Public Life

It is natural enough that those who hold the mirror up to public life should desire, where they have the inclination, to take a share in it. It is a purely natural step. Journalists serve on every kind of administrative body in the country, and, other qualifications being equal, it is natural that the quality of their service should be high. For one thing, the journalist knows all about procedure, or he ought to, and that is a point of some importance in public administration.

Moreover, the journalist has, or should have, an adequate background of knowledge of affairs which cannot fail to be of service to his fellows in whatever sphere he chooses. It is unnecessary to name individuals, but our acquaintance includes journalists who are parish, district, and borough councillors, social workers of every imaginable sort, and Members of Parliament.

The present House of Commons has more journalists in it than any of its predecessors, and there is an increasing movement from the Gallery to the floor of the House since the late Mr. T. P. O'Connor took that course, becoming, forty years after, the Father of the House. There, more than in any other sphere, knowledge of the traditions of Parliament is of value. The Gallery man who becomes a Member must be a fully-qualified member in respect of a very important phase of his duties. Of course, there is a certain proportion of M.P.'s who have entered journalism after they entered the

House of Commons through the wide portals which offer themselves.

Cabinet Ministers turn quite naturally to newspaper contracts when the turn of party fortunes places them for a time out of office. And there is not a professional journalist who would be prepared to deny that at least two Ministerial journalists of modern times have not made good at the profession which they took up for the purpose of occupying themselves, maintaining their position in the public eye, and of earning a large income at the same time.

It follows, therefore, that it is a necessary part of the equipment of the journalist that he should be able to express himself in speech with the same lucidity as with the pen. But one may be permitted to record it as a matter of observation that there are many highly-qualified journalists who are curiously tongue-tied, and many who are quite curiously verbose, having regard to their training. For his credit's sake the journalist should cure such of these faults as he is conscious of.

## SECTION IV

### JOURNALISTIC TECHNIQUE

#### CHAPTER XVII

#### THE NOSE FOR NEWS

THERE are good journalists with whom this instinct has been so assiduously and purposefully cultivated that it is commonly said that they were born with it. But it can be grafted upon any stock, and a man who does not pick up this sixth sense early in his professional life has to do it painfully later on. He must acquire it somehow. Nor is it only true that it is a necessity to the man who deals in news *qua* news. He whose function it is to interpret the news must know what news is.

Generally, it is true that the man who has a full equipment of the qualities which go to the making of a journalist, but is unable to spot the news-point at sight, is left in the race. If he has to have the essence of the matter pointed out to him; if, to put it in another way, he is dependent upon the eyes of another person, he will be constantly left behind.

The friendly spirit is strong in the journalist. There is no profession in which men help each other so readily; but the pace of modern journalism is such that no man can depend upon help in seeing things which matter. It will not be available when most wanted.

#### What is News ?

We quote the aphorism of Lord Northcliffe in definition of news with apologies. It has been used so often, but it is so illustrative, so pointed, that it has its place here. "If a dog bites a man it is not news, but if a man bites a dog. . . ."

This generation of journalists has been trained in the school of actual practice by a race of newsmen who give high rank to the unusual. It might be urged, and with justification, that a great deal of the matter which passes for news in the daily Press is too trivial in content to be so dignified. It is all a matter of angle. News may be important without being interesting, and the converse applies.

### How it may be Cultivated

The man in the street doesn't know it, but the unvarnished truth is that journalists do not happen by chance upon the news which is daily gathered together for the public edification. It has to be anticipated, prepared for, and followed up, and the greatest virtue of all in a newsman is anticipation. That is what is really meant by the phrase "A nose for news."

You may prove it in this way. Walk down a street of your home town, or if you are a Londoner, along any street which is thoroughly familiar to you. Half an hour later set down on paper the incidents which come under your observation which could reasonably be described as news. You will be surprised at the scanty yield. Indeed, you might walk up and down that street for a year without seeing anything out of the ordinary. Even the motor accident which you will see some day, will not be necessarily news unless somebody is killed, and even then it wouldn't be NEWS unless the person killed was SOMEBODY. You see the difference?

The possessor of the nose for news proceeds otherwise in his search. He knows that the chance of falling upon a story is quite remote, but he is well aware also that a dozen people he may meet represent news in one form or another. In London, the point may not have general application, but it is true of every provincial centre, large and small, and if the underlying idea is developed it will be found to have application in London as well.

## Memory for Faces

This is a supremely important asset. The well-equipped journalist must cultivate these particular brain-cells assiduously if he is to make the fullest use of his opportunities. Let a case be stated. There are plenty of people in the average journalist's circle who are valuable to him as news supply sources. He must know them, and must develop this foible even though its mainspring be vanity, as it often is.

He may meet such a man casually; and on the occasion of the next meeting that same man may be able and willing to uncover a news story. If he finds that the journalist does not remember his name and plainly does not recall the circumstances of the earlier meeting, he is less disposed to be communicative. And apart from a circumstance of this sort, much more frequently occurring than the layman might suppose, there is the obvious advantage of a good memory for faces when an individual, once seen, even if only in a photograph, has to be identified in a hurry.

The occasional task of a journalist is to find a well-known man or woman upon an incoming liner at the ports. Very occasionally the task is easy enough because an outstanding personality is known to everybody, and even in the bustle of landing is easily identifiable. But the man or woman who springs suddenly into the news, and of whom the searcher has nothing, possibly, but a dimly-remembered photograph to go by, is no easy task to pick out from five hundred when all are in a desperate hurry.

## Remember the Pictures

A good memory for pictured faces is a real asset in these circumstances, and not less important is the extra sense which every journalist develops concerning the sources of facts. To the journalist in a strange environment this instinct is of tremendous importance, because it is his

constant experience to find himself in search of raw materials in surroundings which are unfamiliar to him.

Especially is this true of the men from London sent into the provinces on duty. The general news-sense seems also to endow the possessor with the capacity for getting into touch with the right people. And it is of definite importance to do this quickly.

Every journalist has had the experience of being sent from pillar to post for information or confirmation when the minutes were flying fast, and of being held up by too rigid ideas of duty. There are, of course, certain elementary rules which every journalist is careful to observe, and which, if followed generally, provide a fairly well-defined trail to the true sources of information, but they are subject to variation, and the nose for news implies an understanding as to the incidence of these variations. Thus is time saved at critical moments.

There is no single journalist of experience who has not had precious minutes wasted for him by official folk who have refused to be convinced of his *bona fides*, or who has not been hindered because he has offended the dignity of a bureaucrat by too great an insistence upon the rights of the Press.

### The Official Mind

The truth about this last point is that the Press, as a vital organism in the national life, has only as much in the way of right as the official mind cares to concede. Thus, the most brilliant "special" may suffer check when most pressed for time for the most trivial reason. An official has been told, maybe, to allow no unauthorized person to pass a given point.

The person from whom the instruction came forgot to mention that Press representatives did not come under that description, and the too literal interpretation of instructions is a constant hampering influence to the journalist in the

execution of his duty. The equipment of the journalist must include the necessary gift of suffering these asperities genially, and on occasion the capacity to circumvent this quite familiar source of difficulty.

It is perfectly well-known that in high places in this country there is the pleasantest appreciation of the task of journalists, and the greatest care is taken that official difficulties, so loved by the bureaucratic mind, do not unduly press. The stories of the King's consideration under this head are quite familiar, and "specials" who have been attached to the world tours of the Prince of Wales have the pleasantest memories (though they are careful not to put them on public record) of the Prince's interest in his attendant journalists and of his anxiety to render their tasks easy.

### A Personal Experience

And the same is true, as a general rule, of most men in the high counsels of the State. The writer has experience in this matter, of every Prime Minister of England of recent times, and of many other Ministers of the Crown.

No journalist expects that requests preferred to Secretaries of State and Ministers of great departments will always be met, but they have got into the way of expecting, as the result of the common experience of the current generation, a studied courtesy, and in certain cases, a measure of personal friendship which has been of great value. Most journalists having regular dealings with official life know that this gift of remembering faces is one which they share with Ministers of the Crown.

There are exceptions, of course, to this happy state of affairs, but on the whole it is pleasant to be able to record that a change for the better has taken place in every department of official life since the war. Departments of State maintain sections and officers whose duty it is not to hamper journalists, but to help them.

Even Scotland Yard has such a department which, starting in the tentative way of providing a room which journalists might use, has been developed into a bureau of information which really yields information—all the results of a better appreciation of the mutual service which two great national organizations can render each other.

These considerations have made the task of the journalist easier, but the qualities which go to the making of the successful practitioner are definitely required in order that he may fully use the facilities which are now available. The sources of facts are the most important consideration of all, and the best modern journalist is he who knows the roads to them. If he knows the short cuts as well, so much the better.

### The Right Friendships

It is as important for the provincial journalist as for his metropolitan brother to make the right friendships; from some points of view more important. He who works on the London daily paper will find his sources of knowledge widened or restricted, according to the way in which his friendships are cultivated.

It has been said that the journalist has no social life; it is only partly true. In fact, he touches more of the social circles than any man. He remains on the fringe of them all, but he should touch as many fringes as possible.

The last thing that should be suggested is that the journalist should cultivate friendships in order that he can turn them to his own uses; but there is a gulf between that piece of social cynicism and the cultivation of friendships which will help rather than retard.

The London man has a greater freedom in this respect. His habits within the limits of propriety can be what they will without damage to his social stock. He may be either a Bohemian or a Christadelphian. In the provinces this is



not the case. There, a man is judged by the company he keeps, not necessarily censoriously. But he is grouped with his associates, and that must mean that some other circles, unless they intersect, may be unknown to him in any intimate sense.

The Bohemian may be a good journalist, and so may the Christadelphian, but in the provinces it frequently happens that the man who does not attach himself to a well-defined social group has the wider opportunities for usefulness. But in the end it is the personal equation that governs this matter.

### The Temptations of a Journalist

This may seem a little trite. In a sense a journalist has no temptations which he does not share with a man of the world in any sphere. And yet it cannot be denied that the journalist may find himself in the way of temptation in a way which does not apply to the professional worker who makes fewer and less varied contacts.

A journalist is, inevitably in some respect, a public figure. He cannot be otherwise. He sees the world, the flesh, and the devil at close quarters, and must on occasion hob-nob with people for whom neither the first, the second, nor the third have any terrors. A couple of generations ago the social habits of many journalists verged on a kind of Bohemianism which has nearly disappeared. To-day, the man who does not regard his attitude to his profession with a proper pride finds that he has to take a less prominent part in the race than his attainments may otherwise entitle him to.

There is, however, one form of temptation to which the journalist is subject which it is necessary to refer to. It is the temptation to superficiality; to a shallow outlook; and in some measure to cynicism. The sound journalist sees the risk of constantly dealing with superficialities, and is at pains

to see that his mind is attuned to realities. It is painfully easy for one who is able to obtain "close-ups" of men who seek publicity as a means to place, to have a cheaper view of his fellows than the man who only sees public figures on their pedestals.

The journalist sees human nature at its best and its worst, and quite naturally the opportunities for seeing it at its worst predominate. As a guard against cynicism, he must keep his mind open to receive the impressions which show his fellow-men at their best; in their moments of self-sacrifice; at times when they manifest the spirit of the team.

### The Journalist's Outlook

This matter only has importance because the journalist's work must reflect his outlook. The professional man of other sorts does not to any extent press his personal viewpoint upon his circle except in an incidental way. The journalist cannot avoid doing so. He cannot, of course, present a personal angle in, perhaps, three-quarters of his work, but in the odd quarter he must, and does.

Wherefore his outlook must be worthy; his ideas the best; his standard steady; and his judgments carefully arrived at.

In one respect the journalist has the advantage in forming his judgments of men and things, for the reason that he sees the inside aspect of movements which often present a different aspect to the public view. Where the man in the street sees the accomplished fact the journalist has witnessed the stages by which the fact accomplished was reached, and that quite commonly makes a difference.

Inherent in that relation is the risk that he may not see problems as a whole but in their parts, and there is the chance, for the same reason, that he may attempt superficial judgments of men because he sees not the completed aim but the manœuvres by which that aim is reached. A man may have a goal in the distance but may not be able

to proceed direct. The journalist accompanying him on the journey, so to speak, may misjudge what he sees.

### How to Maintain Freshness of Mind

A journalist must do it somehow; it must be a conscious task, deliberately undertaken, fearlessly pursued. You see, staleness shows itself in the work of the writing man at once; he cannot afford, for his credit's sake, to be other than on his mental toes all the time. How can that be done? There are no rules, naturally. Each man or woman must seek refreshment of spirit according to his or her own vision. One will find it in a change of reading, in the study of a new subject. For the journalist, if he is honest with himself, finds out more quickly than most how precious little of the sum total of knowledge is his. It ought to make him humble, but it often fails to do that.

Still, the writer who calls himself a journalist, condemned in consequence to constant association with the trivial, will always find refreshment in the study of a subject which is to him an uncharted sea. But that way of seeking will not suit everybody. There are minds which emit their brightest sparks by new contact, and for these the way of study would be the way of boredom. Freshness a journalist must maintain somehow, suiting the manner of his search to his temperament. If he fails to realize the importance of doing so, the risk is that he will become a cynic; and a not inapt definition of such is: One who subtracts from, rather than adds to, the common stock.

### The Thrill of the Hunt for News

This affects every journalist. It is something that the lay mind cannot grasp, but every journalist responds to its urge, and puts out his best work when working under its stimulus. News-getting is not a matter of rules, but there are certain central principles which the journalist learns

quite early in his professional contacts, and which he unconsciously observes.

Thus, the journalist without social tact may achieve a considerable measure of success in his particular speciality, but the possession of this asset makes him a more efficient news-gatherer and interpreter of the movements of which he is an observer. Similarly, the man who has not studied affairs in their modern application and the historic background of them, may never be conscious of his lack, but it is certain that his will be better work if he takes the trouble to see that his equipment is a general one.

The competitive aspect of modern journalism adds to the thrill, but it cannot be denied that it sometimes has the effect of inducing a disproportionate sense of values. The hunt for a new fact in competition with others sometimes has the effect of throwing a heightened light upon it, and of getting it out of focus in relation to its setting. Thus there is constant war between the journalist's conception of the public appetite and the need to weigh facts carefully and to keep to a sense of values which is intrinsic.

### A Sense of Responsibility

It is in this respect that the journalist must realize a sense of responsibility. In an age which has set the superficial upon a pedestal, he must use his capacity for adjusting the balance of things to the public good. Especially should he use care not to appeal to the least common factor in public intelligence, and beware of mass movements. A famous preacher said, on the day that these lines were written, that all the king's horses and all the king's men would not drag him into a mass movement again. The journalist who cares for his craft cannot take that line, but he can, and must, realize that he holds in his hand one of the instruments by which mass movements are forged, and that he must use it purposefully and with care.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE DAY'S WORK

THERE is a classic story of a young reporter who returned from an engagement with a long report "on his book." He was told to cut it down by half, and his reply was: "Which half will you have?" The story is probably not true, but it is the fact that many reporters of the old school working on country papers invariably used the first and last paragraph of a formal report when they were told to cut it down. And some of them wrote it in full first and did the cutting afterwards.

The journalist does not exist who at some moment of his career was not overwhelmed with some particular task. He soon got over these moments of fright, because his first lessons consisted in separating the essential from the inessential, but it is thought to be a useful exercise to set down in easily comprehended form a system of dealing with familiar jobs which regularly come the way of the provincial worker.

These examples are chosen haphazardly. They purport to show the paths through the jungles of inessential material on typical occasions. Imagine, for instance, an agricultural show of the larger sort. These things are properly handled from the official angle now, and the young journalist generally finds that his needs have been anticipated to a great extent. He will find it necessary to stick closely to his instructions and not to be led down side avenues by interested folk, and especially ought he to regard the time-table which, if he serves an evening paper, will have been prepared for him.

Head-quarters staffs of newspapers get angry when the wrong stuff comes to them; when the paper's special needs in the way of local matter are not properly observed. The

young reporter sent for the first time to a big show is under trial. He simply must separate the wood from the trees.

### In the Courts

Reporting in the Courts in the provinces has snares, too, and the same principle applies. The reporter must be sure of his note, and careful of his short cuts, and his first job must always be "to get the hang of the thing." Then he will be saved a heap of inessential writing. His story must have a thread; points which are opened must be followed up, and loose phrases, such as "So-and-so corroborated," avoided, for the reason that So-and-so may only corroborate a portion of a given story, and it will be a serious matter to saddle him with the responsibility of having backed the whole of it.

Precision in the matter of names and addresses is a matter requiring the closest attention, and a point to be noted is that while pleadings and openings are not supposed to go beyond the facts which are capable of strict proof, they sometimes do.

Every journalist has had experience of the attempt to colour Court reports or to secure their omission on the part of persons concerned. It is not necessary to call the attention of the authorities to attempts of this sort, but it is an urgency that the individual should be made to understand quite plainly that he has transgressed a major rule of an honourable profession.

### Reporters' Rights

Every journalist needs to be reminded that he has no rights in any Court. His precise status is that of a member of the public. By custom it has been conceded that he represents the public, and he is accorded facilities which will aid him in the efficient discharge of his task. He is no part of the Court machinery, and is subject to all the regulations

which govern the presence of the public in every Court of the land.

It is true that he has a right to attend certain meetings of public authorities by statute of fairly recent date, but this right is occasionally disputed, and in such cases as this the journalist must be very sure of his ground if he quotes the statute in aid. A special snag in Court reporting concerns the use of documents which are relevant. They are commonly made available for the use of the Press representatives, but they should be avoided, save for the purpose of confirming the names and addresses given in open Court, because it is only permissible to report that which is publicly stated.

### **Less Public Interest ?**

With regard to Press duties at meetings of public authorities, the assumption of the moment is that the public interest in statutory bodies, from Parliament downwards, is declining. There is some evidence that this is true, but it is also a fact, one suggests, that a reason for lessened interest in these matters was, and is, the unimaginative reporting of them.

The sketch meets the public need in regard to the doings of *Parliament*, and it is not unlikely that if in the provinces the doings of local authorities were handled in the same way, people would take more interest in these things. The London County Council is probably the largest spending authority in the world which is not national in character, but it is wretchedly treated by the national newspapers in the matter of publicity.

In the provincial Press, especially among the weeklies, the doings of the corresponding authorities, the County Councils, are invariably slavishly reported and in such detail as to be thoroughly uninteresting. And one is compelled to the point of view that this is very often due to the habit of the provincial reporter of seizing avidly upon any bit of

printed matter which is laid before him by a public authority, and giving it publicity beyond its news deserts because it is official.

Wherefore it is suggested as obligatory on the young journalist to understand fully the working of the machinery of government in his locality so that he can explain what is being done. Then he can avoid the use of the stodgy language of official reports—which cannot avoid being detailed—to the great benefit of his paper and the greater interest of its clientele.

### Interviewing

There are some points about interviewing which have psychological importance. Interviewing can mean anything, from the business of gathering up the details of happenings which have not become public, but which are known to somebody interested in letting people know about them through the medium of the papers, to the interviews of the highest importance which a generation ago Mr. Stead conducted, and which, in more recent times, certain American journalists have developed into a fine art.

Mr. Stead's interviews were really character sketches; they revealed the mind of the interviewee more definitely than any record of his spoken word on a given occasion, and some of them belonged to literature.

The best and most readable interviews are never those which set out to record meticulously the precise words of famous men, and it is a perfectly sound rule, though one to which there are exceptions, that a notebook and a pencil can be a peril as well as a stay.

In a considerable experience of interviewing of what may be called the national kind, this writer has rarely used a note for the reason that it tends to stereotype an interview and to give it formality, which is the last thing a really readable interview, which shows the mind of a man, should suggest.



## Examples

Of course, there are good subjects and bad ones, and a further variation is that the good subjects have bad moments and the bad subjects good ones. Mr. Baldwin is always delightful, for even when he is unable to furnish facts to the interviewer he can supply a shining fancy. Mr. Lloyd George submits to interviews with the utmost geniality, but experienced interviewers—some of them are well-known to Mr. Lloyd George—are always prepared to admit that though the encounters have been invariably interesting they have been a little barren of result. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald shows occasional impatience; Mr. Churchill, more than a little. The late Lord Birkenhead was generally urbane but uncommunicative. British official personages, the heads of the great services, ambassadors, are not as a rule helpful to interviewers.

American leading men of the same standing take an entirely different point of view about these matters, and their treatment of British journalists is rather like their treatment of "the boys" in New York, which the Britisher finds a little disconcerting, not being so well able to judge when the interviewee has his tongue in his cheek.

## A Change

Big business men on both sides of the Atlantic are changing their methods of dealing with the Press in interview form. There are few of them who adopt the brusquerie which was common a generation ago. Speaking from an experience of this matter which is quite curiously varied, one would say that there are few better subjects than Lord Melchett. He has a way of opening out the wider horizons in interviews; he takes pains about them. He never regards them, as do some of his peers, as a kind of impertinence, and as a result he is always good copy.

Literary figures are not in these days good subjects for interview, for they know that they can sell what in an

interview they are being invited to give away, but there are exceptions, and Mr. Galsworthy is one of them. Film stars are, in these days, too easy. Their publicity value is not what it was; their Press agents get in the way, so to speak, and as a result their publicity is inclined to be stereotyped.

Still, the journalist who has a good deal of interviewing to do has some delightfully varied experiences, and it is a first necessity that he should bear himself with confidence; develop all the tact of which he is capable; that he should never omit to make himself familiar with the interviewee's special subject, and, if possible, with his recent movements and interests. There is really more importance in this than appears. One remembers hearing a journalist ask Lady Oxford a question to which he really ought to have known the answer. . . .

### “ Stunt ” Reporting

In the matter of stunt reporting—every journalist will appreciate the implications of the phrase—the provincial journalist is in the position, the happy position, of knowing less about it than his opposite number on the national journals. Of course, he has sometimes to take a share in efforts which are designed to improve circulation figures in particular areas, and for that reason must learn a new standard of news values, but that, for the provincial worker, merely means that he must be a little more detailed in his work. He must still provide what the provinces regard as news. In London the expectation, frequently enough, is that he should provide fine writing on a slightly inadequate theme.

It cannot be denied that the provincial public frequently regard the incursions of special commissioners and other journalists with high-falutin descriptions into their areas with a measure of amusement, but that is not always the reporter's fault.

The provincial reader of a “special's” story requires to

be told therein something he has not known before—which is difficult because the comb which the provincial applies to his own area is fairly closely worked—and what the news editor demands of the same special is bright writing. In the result the news editor gets what HE wants, and the provincial journalist, reading that cheery half-column, may be excused for the comment that he has not had the luck to call a half-column a day's work for years.

It takes all sorts to make up the journalist's world. One has met the "special" on the national paper who has called it a happy day when he had two sticks of his own writing in the paper he served. A single engagement on a country weekly can easily yield a page and a half closely set. The contrast offers the temptation to discuss comparatively the situation of the provincial and the national journalist, but it is one which must be put aside for the reason that all the materials for a fair comparison are not available.

It is a perfectly natural thing that the young journalist should cherish the ambition to win a place in "the street" as quickly as he can, but it is also the fact that many men who have spent half a lifetime on that great adventure have yearned for the comparative peace of a country job.

### Essential Differences

There are essential differences in the matter of qualification. Either road provides prizes as well as disappointments, but it may be said to boil down to this: that the choice lies between the possibility of becoming a considerable cog in a small machine or a tiny cog in a big one. In its detail it means that on a given job the national journalist seeks to present an attractive picture on a small scale of a given event in which the values are proportionate; the local journalist has a larger canvas, must pay the closest attention to detail, and would find himself in constant hot water if he tried to mix the two styles.

Men working in the country, administratively or in the actual work of reporting, are happy enough in jobs which would drive many men distracted by the infinity of their detail and by the constant pressure of outside circumstance, just as there are men serving the national papers who have failed to find their niche in London, but who might have won considerable success in the provinces.

## CHAPTER XIX

### MODERN NEWSPAPER STYLE

AN examination of modern newspaper style at this moment will be found to yield curious results. In some respects it was never better; in other directions the descent into really bad newspaper practice has been complete. The matter is of some importance, for the truth is that the newspaper is the chief custodian of the King's English. This may seem to be a large claim, but it can be justified. A very large proportion of the population read nothing but the newspaper and the periodical Press, and unless those who write for papers within these groups make a conscious effort to maintain some kind of purity of use, the language of Shakespeare is likely to be debased. We would ask that the journalist should set for himself, and from his youth, the highest possible standard, and that he should not, through carelessness or the belief that purity of language is of small account, decline from that standard.

In this matter of standards there are admitted difficulties. Have we not seen a wide divergence of view in recent times, following the pronouncements of a B.B.C. Committee on the subject of the correct pronunciation of debatable words? There is, of course, no standard which stands still; nothing which is really static. There was the standard of the earlier *Spectator*, still read happily by purists, but can you imagine any newspaper writer attempting to clothe his descriptions of modern events, or his thoughts and conclusions upon them, in language such as was then employed? It is a necessary part of the training of the journalist that he should read the prose of the heroic time; thus will he discover the value of words and their fitness, but he must not become imitative

either of this master or any other. The language the journalist uses must express himself.

### Shifting Standards

The shifting nature of the standards of newspaper English may be assessed by a glance backward. This generation can remember quite easily when journalese was a reality ; indeed, it has not disappeared from our journals yet. Older men who picked up the rotund and florid style in their youth are still writing, and it would be alike impossible to cure them of the habit, and to convince them that it is as nearly out of key with the spirit of this age as the language of the days when only a tiny percentage of the people read newspapers at all.

George Augustus Sala created a style which was known for many years as "Telegraphese," not because it had the staccato quality which seems to be implied in the word, but because it was for the *Daily Telegraph* that that very accomplished journalist wrote. If his age could be said to have a definite newspaper style at all, the writing of Sala embodied it.

Telegraphese, as journalists understood the word, disappeared when the penny paper field, as it might be called, was challenged by newspapers which, at the time of their first issue, were published at a halfpenny. These newspapers essayed to present all that the larger papers did, and it was necessary that they should do it in fewer and shorter words. They created a new and vivid style ; a new form of idiomatic English which has almost become standard.

### The Old Newspapers

The student should, as a part of his training, make a point of obtaining as wide an acquaintance with newspaper English as is possible, nor should he confine it to the contemporary records, or to the metropolitan newspapers. If he reads the century-old weekly papers, which then provided the bulk

of newspaper readers with what they wanted to know about the doings of the world, he will be surprised to see how pure a standard of English was maintained in them. Perhaps it was that those who wrote in them had more time to write properly. In any case he would rarely find slipshod and meaningless English in them. They were full of floridities, and quite often one has the sense that the writers were merely filling the column; but construction was good, there was balance in argument, and an abhorrence of slang. They knew all about invective, too, these journalists of old time. Plainly, they had no fear of the law of libel. It has sometimes been imagined that Dickens was overdrawing when he pictured the *Eatanswill Gazette*, and of course he was to some extent. But there are many newspapers still in existence whose ancient files contain matter nearly as extravagant.

### “ Foreign Intelligence ”

They should be read, some of these old weekly papers which have so fine and continuous a tradition of service to their localities, not so much for the fact that they recorded local history, but for the purity of the language which they used. In strict fact they did not record local history at all well, looking at this matter from our standpoints. They were obsessed by the importance of what they called the foreign intelligence; by the movement of events in Parliament; by the doings of the Court. They had not, as have the local papers of this day, a strongly-marked local instinct finding expression in a precise and detailed combing of the area concerned, week by week.

That, however, is a little off the point, except that it provides the opportunity to suggest that papers of this character have not, in the matter of the careful guardianship of the mother tongue, fallen from their high standard. There are weekly papers published in small towns in many cases

which are, from this standpoint alone, models. Their standard of what a weekly paper should look like is not, perhaps, as high as their conception of its detailed contents. Still, there are journalists working on provincial newspapers up and down the country, who take a craftsman's pleasure in the production of the perfect paragraph, though the reason why they are still country journalists doing humdrum tasks is because they have not been able to see the wood for the trees.

### A "Make-up" Point

Although it is the fact that there is nothing in the least like a standard, it is true that the standard set by every newspaper possessed of proper pride is a very high one. No editor in the kingdom regards it as sufficient to sling the paper together, relying for circulation on the fact that the news and the comment are there, and that it is for the reader to disentangle them. It may be argued that there is, perhaps, a greater insistence upon "make-up" from the point of view of appearance than upon writing, and the plain truth is that it is as impossible to hide barrenness of thought with frills in "make-up" as it is to disguise it with fine writing. The newspaper reader wants meat, to put it coarsely; he is not impressed by a pretty frill round the dish, still less by want of imagination in the cooking. That is not to say, however, that he despises the *soufflé*. He likes the light touch better than anything else in the whole newspaper menu, but it must contain something to tickle his palate.

The moral of this parable is that the journalist who would pay a good deal of attention to his style, while not forgetting that it is the alpha and omega of newspaper writing, should endeavour always to strike the appropriate note. The light touch by all means, in its place; the note of gravity, too, but not often; the note of simplicity always.



## Simplicity First

The essential quality of good newspaper style, indeed, is simplicity. Plain statements of fact are never improved by purple patches, and expressions of opinion are only clouded by rhetorical qualifications. An opinion which needs to be qualified should be recast. Especially does this need for simplicity apply to introductory matter. Facts, and not words, should be the staple of "introductions," and if all the facts can be summarized, to be developed later, it is a great help when last-minute cutting is necessary.

Though precision is vital in reporting the spoken word, it is sometimes necessary, in dealing with humdrum matters, to disentangle sentences and to purge away the words which fog the underlying idea. This must be done with great care; it is a matter of everyday practice to which insufficient thought is sometimes given. There is a risk that fluent speakers will get more than their share of space for no other reason than that they have the gift of facile expression. The man who is halting in speech often expresses a big idea clumsily. The pearls are not always highly polished, and it is no part of a reporter's duty to pick out only the shiny ones.

A sense of proportion is one of the greatest of gifts. An event which lasts three hours is not of necessity important; a printed document of great length is not meant to be incorporated in a report because it has that quality. A slab of print may be easy copy for operators, but it is often indigestible to readers. Summarize it—AFTER READING IT THROUGH.

Meetings of public bodies are not entitled to much space merely because they are held in a public place and are attended by well-known people. A reporter who tables half a column of a Burial Board meeting renders a less useful service than his colleague who digs out of an unwilling veteran a thrilling story of his youth.

A sound guiding principle, subject, of course, to exceptions,

is that news about people is better reading than news about things. The difference is just that between the static and the dynamic.

### Individual Style

Every newspaper office, whether large or small, or belonging to the considerable class, numerically, which comes between the extremes, has its own distinctive style, but in them all care is taken not to push idiosyncrasy too far. The experienced journalist knows that certain national newspapers have what he is sometimes tempted to call little fads of their own, and if by chance he knows them, he is careful in writing for their columns to observe them. He cannot know them all, but careful reading will indicate the rough lines of the office arrangements in this respect.

This matter falls under two heads. There are the plans which secure that words in common use, descriptions, abbreviations, and the like should always, in the same newspaper, be dealt with in the same way. Especially important is this in respect of the use of capitals, and most papers, if they are carefully edited, have a system from which there is only the rarest deviation. This, of course, is a matter of sub-editorial functioning which may not greatly interest the general reader, but it is undoubtedly offensive to the purist—and some newspaper readers are not only critical on these points but vocal also—to see the apostrophe used in the same words in different ways in the same issue. In general, there is a tendency to reduce the use of the apostrophe as much as possible for the sake of simplicity.

Another matter in which care is generally taken to maintain a rule is in the spelling of proper names, especially of foreign places. Buenos Ayres, Bukharest, are only two of a dozen cities the spelling of which differs. Most offices provide that these and the others shall always be spelt in the same way. There are rules, too, in regard to the use of "by" in

compound words so that a common form shall be maintained, but in this and other cases in which either of two ways of rendering a given word is equally accepted, it is often laid down that while the settled form should be used in all editorial matter, in the case of advertisements the rendering preferred by the advertiser shall prevail.

### Style Books

Some papers go into infinite detail in these matters. One famous newspaper has a style book used, or supposed to be used, by the whole of its staffs, in which relatively trifling matters are scheduled. Thus, it is indicated that "per £1" is the correct form and not "per £." There is also in the same book detailed instructions regarding quotations. Thus, "Quotations in leaders to have inverted commas at the beginning of each line, but the quotation must turn into the third line before this rule applies." There are many others of the same sort, and the book is plainly the work of a careful scholar. But we have it on the authority of the newspaper concerned that it has not been revised for some time. It is a tribute to the thoroughness of the work that it does not seem out of date.

Style books appertaining to particular offices are not common. Some newspapers have them and others maintain certain general principles without tabulating them. Writers on staffs absorb them by degrees. Thus, *The Times* has such a book which deals, as the manager once said, "only with our own idiosyncrasies." The *Morning Post* is not so provided, the rule of the office being that the English language shall be used as simply and correctly as possible.

Even in this matter of the full and correct descriptions of newspapers there are variations. *The Times* prefers that it should be described as here, but in one of the few style books we have seen, that of *The Scotsman*, it is suggested that the right way would be *Times* (newspaper), although

*The Scotsman's* rendering of its own title is as we have given it.

Style, speaking generally, represents the point of view of the strongest individuality amongst those who form a newspaper executive. It may, or may not, be the editor. Style may not seem important to all editors. One knows many whose point of view is: "Let's have the news, quickly and accurately, and the rest can go hang." And there are others whose individuality expresses itself all over the paper in little oddities of form which, even if they can be described as idiosyncrasies, do not detract from the paper's value.

If it is possible to summarize the whole matter in a few words, the need of newspaper English is that it should be succinct, simple, and vigorous. The language of Shakespeare is not newspaper English, but the same quality belongs to it of terseness and expressiveness. The search for the precise word is not waste, for in that way sloppiness is avoided. The journalese of the last generation was less effective than the journalese of the generation before, because it was sloppy and discursive. Modern newspaper English is a jewel having many facets, but they are at least all bright and shining.

## CHAPTER XX

### JOURNALISM AND THE LAW

It would be impossible, in a section of a book on a wide general subject such as this, to do more than to indicate the contacts which the journalist may make with the law, remembering the special relationship in which he stands to the public. One reason why the journalist should especially have in mind the legal aspect of what he does, is because all his works are manifest. The fiercest possible light always beats about him, and in its rays his smallest sins of commission, and many of those of omission, are shown up mercilessly. Wherefore the soundest advice that can be given to the journalist is that he should always have these considerations in the forefront of his mind.

It is impossible for the layman to indicate the way to avoid trouble in this matter, and for that reason it would be inappropriate to regard this chapter as more than a general warning notice. A common assumption is that it is necessary for the journalist to have a working knowledge of the body of law relating to libel and copyright, and to let it go at that. Not so. There are many hundred other ways in which it is possible for him to offend and to incur the penalty of want of care. And there are as many more opportunities of sinning which are not the fruit of want of care at all.

The law relating to lotteries and gaming, and some of these go back to the early eighteenth century, are, in some respects, the concern of journalists; the law relating to liability may easily be his affair; the Factory Acts may affect him and what he does; there are the complex Official Secrets Acts, and in recent times a body of law which regulates what he may and may not report. It is not nearly as simple as it seems.

### A General Principle

As a general principle it may be set down as of the utmost importance that the journalist should never commit himself to a statement of the truth of which he is not reasonably assured. Accuracy must be his guiding principle at all times and in all places. The temptation not to apply the sternest tests is sometimes very great. The journalist is often working at the highest pressure; he may affirm that he hadn't time to fully test the truth of a statement for which he is responsible before all the world. That may be the fact, but his plain duty in that case is not to affirm it at all.

But even that matter must be construed in the light of ordinary common sense. Facts cannot be ignored because they cannot be proved as a lawyer would require them to be proved. The journalist must deal often with probabilities rather than proved facts, but he must realize that in such cases he takes a risk, and it is his duty to eliminate these risks as far as possible by refraining from statements which may be construed as reflecting on the conduct of other people.

### A Simple Example

It very rarely happens, though it is not unknown, that the journalist makes a statement concerning people which he is conscious will be followed by a writ for libel. With certain exceptions, libel cases are generally the fruit of mistakes or of failure to appreciate the implications of a given statement. Take the simplest kind of illustration as an example. A man may be proceeded against for theft. In the ordinary course he appears before a Court of Summary Jurisdiction. His case may not be settled at once for a dozen reasons, and in the end he may be acquitted. To head a paragraph relating to the circumstances on the first occasion, "Thief caught at So-and-so," would be a libel, for the reason that the man was subsequently proved not to be a thief.

That is the commonest of all snags, and it may seem to belong to the very elements of the matter. In that form it is so, but there are other complexities. There are whole groups of offences against the law, roughly described as felonies, which cannot be disposed of by magistrates sitting in a Court of first instance; they must, by the statutes which govern them, be tried, after the magistrates have held that a *prima facie* case exists, by a higher Court. There, it is conceivable, an acquittal may follow, notwithstanding that magistrates have held that there was a case which should properly be sent for trial. An affirmation of guilt; any indication in the heading of a news item or in the body of it that guilt had been, in fact, proved, would provide grounds for action which would do irreparable damage to the credit of the writer.

It has to be remembered that it is impossible to effectively say afterwards that no libel was intended. The material point is the effect upon the mind of the general public who have read that A has, as a fact, committed a certain act when it has not been proved against him.

### Need for Great Care

The variations of this kind of newspaper sin are illimitable. Journalists concerned with matters of record in the Courts pay the greatest attention to them, and, indeed, it is only rarely in these days that mistakes of this sort are made. It is, of course, a commonplace in the experience of those who conduct newspapers, that there are people who attempt to place constructions upon statements concerning them which are not justified.

Every newspaper executive has been threatened by somebody aggrieved at some time or another, and not seldom by people whose only concern it was to frighten money out of newspapers by the threat of penalties which could not be won in the Courts.

### Implication or Accident

It cannot be denied, however, that those who conduct newspapers run a constant risk in publishing statements which they have no possible means of testing from the point of view of accuracy. News supplied through agencies to a chain of newspapers may, by implication or accident, defame the character of an individual, and it has happened often that the individual has been able to gain damages, either through the Courts or by the threat of proceedings to follow, from each paper in which the particular statement appeared. The sum total of the reward accruing to such an individual has oftentimes outweighed any damage which has been done to his character.

A point full of difficulty for the journalist relates to the privileged occasion. It does not mean that A and B are entitled to slander C or D, and to say, when challenged, that the occasion was one named in the statute as privileged, but it may mean that a challenge may not be taken before the Courts for settlement, or rather, if it is, a defence is provided. Nor is it implied that the journalist, who records statements which would be actionable if uttered in the street, must use less care if they are used in a privileged place, because in the matter of accuracy the privileged occasion provides no shelter.

### Must be Decent

If a statement is made on a privileged occasion, the person who made the statement may be protected from effective challenge, but if it is misreported the protection would not extend to the reporter.

There is another consideration not generally appreciated. Statements made on a privileged occasion and duly reported must, in addition to being accurate, be decent. The journalist has a responsibility in that matter and may not shelter behind privilege.



Statements made in the Houses of Parliament are privileged always; evidence in Courts of Law has the same protection, and the same applies to statements made in a Coroner's Court, which is a Court of Inquiry. Then, again, meetings of some public bodies are privileged and some are not. In fact, the journalist is not in a position to decide what is and what is not a privileged occasion, for the statutes are not always definite, and the matter is governed to some extent by the decided cases.

There is, however, one point of supreme importance for the journalist in this matter. The accurate reproduction of a statement on a privileged occasion, which outside would be libellous, must not be accompanied by any newspaper comment of an offensive kind, and the writer must always remember that a headline is comment. It is not part of the statement, and has its place merely as a *pointer*. It should be no more. It should indicate the nature of the matter referred to in the text, but should not contain an expression of opinion.

The use of the word "alleged" is quite common as a necessary qualification, but it must not be used casually. The journalist should, in his youth, acquire the habit of being precise in his language in order that precision may be the mark of his work in the handling of what every journalist calls "dangerous stuff."

### The Safe Man

The best reputation that a newspaper executive can acquire is that he is a "safe" man. A brilliant man who is not safe is a source of peril, and a rough and effective description of the safe man is he who never "lets things go" when there is, in his trained judgment, the very least doubt about their accuracy. There must be occasions when a fine story has elements of danger; keenness suggests that it may be worth the risk; that the risk may not, after all, exist.

There is the chance that a rival may take a risk and never be called upon to face unpleasant consequences. Considerations such as these must never affect the judgment of the man who passes news matter which reflects upon the credit of another person.

### Accuracy Must be Assumed

Naturally, the sub-editor or the news editor must take some risk. He cannot guarantee the accuracy of every statement which passes under his hand, and he is fully aware that daily, hourly, statements are made which are damaging to the reputation of somebody; it must be so in the Courts. He knows that occasions such as these are privileged, and he must assume, unless there is internal evidence which creates a doubt in his mind, that the matter is accurately reported. The safe man is he who, when the doubt arises, takes steps to confirm.

And there is a point in this which affects the reporter. In London, Court work is chiefly handled by men of great experience; they are specialists, and in some cases lawyers as well, but elsewhere the reporter has to learn as he goes along. There is one urgent lesson which he must learn, and quickly, and it is this: That he must never report more than is actually stated in his hearing in Court. That sounds obvious, but it is not. Thus, in Courts of Summary Jurisdiction, details are sometimes not put before the Court which are necessary to complete elucidation, possibly for the reason that everybody knows them.

### Possible Dangers

The reporter must not draw upon his knowledge to fill these blanks; there is danger in adding addresses which have not been publicly given, even when obtained from official sources. It may seem to be a small point, but the possibilities of danger are enormous. An address given may

be that, for instance, of a person of the same name. The coincidence seems unlikely, but it has happened scores of times, and, though generally these matters are capable of being peaceably handled, there is plain danger in the matter of names and addresses in Court proceedings, and need for meticulous care.

### Copyright

There are ever-yawning pitfalls in this matter. In theory it seems simple enough, but in the matter of interpretation it rarely happens that two people think alike. The thoughts of a writer as he sets them down are his own, and he has the full right to such value as they may possess; just as the turnips that the farmer grows are his. But, like the farmer, the writer has to protect them, and the machinery he must use is the law of copyright.

### Variations

Roughly speaking, the writing of journalists, if they are staff men employed on the customary agreements, belongs to the proprietors of the papers they write for. It is a common thing, however, for agreements with occasional writers, and occasionally with staff men, to specify otherwise, which, of course, alters the situation. Breaches of copyright take place constantly, of course; news which is supplied to one paper and paid for is constantly being "lifted" into another without acknowledgment, or even with acknowledgment in breach of the underlying principles of the statute, but it is not practicable to deal with these except in flagrant cases.

Occasionally, the opportunity is taken to frighten some persistent "lifter" out of his life by a solemn warning, but it is very rarely, indeed, that a public example is made of him.

One great daily paper has an understanding that one-third of its special news-matter may be used by other papers

on condition that acknowledgment of its source is made, but that would not, of course, apply to its literary features, or news which by custom gravitates to it from special sources.

The journalist discovers by some kind of instinct which kind of matter may be lifted in safety and which is taboo, and there must be great numbers who of necessity make constant use of the property of other people at second-hand.

### Public Discrimination

It is a feature of journalism which is not so noticeable as it used to be. The reading public has been trained into a more discriminating frame of mind. It will not tolerate second-hand matter. It is a matter of difficulty to define copyright in regard to strict news: only the literary form in which news is couched is capable of protection.

The record of a particular happening is news for a limited space of time after it happens, and during that time such rights as exist in it are of value. Afterwards the value is nil, and no damage is done to the possessor of the copyright if it is used by somebody else without formal authority. Values in this matter shift so constantly that it is impossible to lay down any definite general principles. Thus, copyright runs (as a minimum) during the lifetime of an author, and for fifty years after his death. This was settled at the Berne Convention, and incorporated in the Act of 1911. As applied to nine-tenths of the contents of the newspaper and periodical Press, the principle has simply no meaning whatever.

### A Matter of Seconds

So much of this would have no value at all within twenty-four hours. For example, one imagines that somebody has a copyright interest for the space of a few seconds, in the name of the winner of the Derby. It is news. It has to be collected at cost, and the person for whom it was

collected, for the information of all the world, holds some rights presumably. But they could never be enforced.

And so in degree it must be with a great deal more of the daily traffic of the news. Matters of record must be on a different footing. It is recognized that since they have the briefest value the operation of the principle of copyright has little importance. But it is quite common for copyright to be rigidly applied to comment on news, and, indeed, on news of special quality prepared by writers with "names."

In cases where news is of the highest quality, it is quite common for one organization to plan it and then to dispose of the rights outside the sphere of its influence to other organizations, in some cases establishing a world copyright. It is a modern development of a principle as old as that very famous journey into Africa by Stanley in search of Livingstone, in which the *Daily Telegraph* and the *New York Herald* were associated.

### Commissioned Articles

But it is not in matters of this order that the newspaper executive runs risks. The statement that matter is copyright in one newspaper is sufficient. Occasions when this material is lifted are very rare. None the less a great deal of material, less news than that in article form, which passes through the hands of the editorial staffs of the newspaper and periodicals has peril in it.

The point may be illustrated in this way. A series of articles may be commissioned from an authority on a particular subject. They may contain at the beginning, material which represents the personal experience of the writer, but it often happens that he draws upon the experience of others also. That may be well enough in certain circumstances, provided that acknowledgment is made, but it has happened often enough, that portions of books have been lifted into articles as the work of the article writer.

Such a case came under the notice of this writer. When challenged by the aggrieved person the editorial reply was that the article writer had assured the newspaper that the material was his own. The author of the book produced definite examples of the deadly parallel which removed all doubt. In the result the newspaper had to pay heavily for breach of copyright. The executive officer of a newspaper cannot possibly guard against this sort of thing. He can only choose his writers with infinite care, and impress upon them the need for straight dealing.

The journalist should always beware, in seeking material, of that which is gathered in encyclopædic form. Much of it is safe enough, but there are exceptions, and in the field of local history there are many snags, as the recorded cases under the copyright law show. It must happen, naturally, that the journalist cannot say on oath how some of the information which he adapts to his own uses found its way into his brain cells, and in any case in the adapted form it becomes his copyright—unless he disposes of his rights by agreement or by the force of custom—but it cannot be too strongly insisted upon that in the matter of using the materials of others there is only one safe policy—and that is the course of complete honesty.

## SECTION V

### NEWSPAPER PRODUCTION: WHAT THE JOURNALIST SHOULD KNOW

#### CHAPTER XXI

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE

WHAT should be the relation of the journalist to those departments of the modern newspaper, which are roughly described as commercial and mechanical? The question is one which needs to be answered with care because, in the experience of every journalist, there is somebody who, by quoting what happened "when he was a boy," has tended to confuse the aspirant. What happened when any veteran, however distinguished, was a boy has nothing to do with the case, because he who would adventure forth on the none too placid seas of newspaperdom, now or in the future, will not be likely to encounter the particular stresses of weather which raged in the good old days. In some respects the breezes will be more favourable than they were: in others they will be worse. What is very certain is that there will be no doldrums.

Thus, all that it will be necessary to say about the old ways, when it was not in the least unusual for the journalist to graduate at the case and to take a hand with packing, is that these things were very good for the soul and the thews of youth, but that they do not of necessity provide the equipment required for success in a day when everything is specialized and carried out by specialists. It follows that the specialist is a better tempered piece of the complex machinery of the modern newspaper than he who is proud to call himself "jack-of-all-trades."



### ON THE "STONE"

A make-up Sub-Editor supervising the building up of a page.





WORKING "AT CASE"

The corner of a Composing Department.

## Of General Application

The implications of these suggestions must not be pushed too far, however. Some of the very ablest of modern journalists, men who have been successful because they kept their eyes fixed on the present and the future, graduated in the smallest of newspaper offices, and cut their wisdom-teeth on jobs which quite frequently included sweeping out the office, and fetching beer for the lordly persons who knew their cases inside out, and could actually make up a page.

But these are the kind of men who, starting before the mast, have finished up on the bridges of liners; who have pulled down the shutters of tiny shops before the dawn, and have been the titled heads of great distributing organizations in their sturdy manhood. The fact that nobody helped them to put their feet on the first rung of the ladder did not reduce the pace at which they moved towards the top. What helped them was that the struggle to get a footing provided them with the momentum by which they were able to take the next few rungs in their stride.

This type of journalist has always been a good executive—with exceptions, of course—because he knows the difficulties of the men who have to do jobs on newspapers which have not an essentially creative quality. It is important that the journalist should know these things in their detail, and if the chances of his early training have not included them, he should make a point of obtaining acquaintance with them, because they really matter a great deal.

## The Essentials

But let him think about it first, lest he be guilty of wasting time and effort on non-essentials. It really does not matter a great deal that the journalist should, as was deemed advantageous in the old days, be able to set matter out of cases. He would never be required to do it, and the knowledge,

being non-essential, would in any case fade from his recollection. But that is not to say that he should not know type faces at a glance, both as to their names, their point value—which is largely taking the place of names—and the width of letter. As a reporter, he saves everybody's time if he has this knowledge; as a sub-editor he can hardly do without it, for in its absence he is a rule-of-thumb worker instead of a precisian in a precisian's job.

As an executive he would be under constant handicap if he has not this knowledge, and it is important also that it should be kept up to date, but not less important that it should not dominate his mind. There are journalists with this knowledge who are a nuisance to those with whom they work, because of their insistence upon the use of particular type at particular moments when it may not be so easily available as another that will do as well.

### A Point in Psychology

There is another point of psychological importance. The mechanical staffs respond to the leadership of a man who knows what he is talking about, but they are not so responsive when such a person is always impressing upon them that he knows rather better than they do.

He is tempted to use the authority which is vested in him to press a particular course of conduct upon experts who should know better than he because it is their specialism, but who cannot say so. The importance of these things is that the departments of a newspaper into which the journalist penetrates in the pursuit of his lawful objects, must not be permitted to hinder because he knows a little about their technology, and is tempted to be "uppish" about it.

In the same way it is necessary that the executive newspaper man should understand make-up fully, but he should beware of the danger of looking at this particular problem through the eyes of the stonehands. The journalist working

at the stone has to look at these things, not through the eyes of those who are carrying out his directions at the stone, but through the eyes of the public who will read their joint efforts presently.

### A Personal Experience

Let this point be illustrated by an experience which occurred less than half an hour before these lines were written. The writer, exercising his lawful editorial functions, had inquired of a stonehand concerning the place in the paper of an item of news relating to a matter which was then developing. He was told that the item in question had gone to press.

Naturally, he asked why; it seemed to be reasonable to expect that it would be common knowledge that it was a continuing item, and the answer that he received from a surprised stonehand was that he didn't know that, and that he knew nothing of the items which he made up into the page. Now, he was a good stonehand, but in this matter was not making, and plainly it was a matter of habit, the fullest use of his faculties. The executive journalist cannot afford at any time to take a narrowed view of his functions, such as is sketched in this illustration.

He must know, for one thing, how long it takes to carry through certain mechanical functions. It may be that he has the authority to demand the utmost speed, but if he has not the knowledge he may be asking physical impossibilities, and although that may not seem to matter, the truth is that there is nothing so destructive of moral authority as this.

The grant of executive authority to a journalist is not quite enough; to get the best out of those who are working with him towards a common end, he must have as extra backing the moral authority which comes with knowledge.

To carry this matter a step further, the journalist should

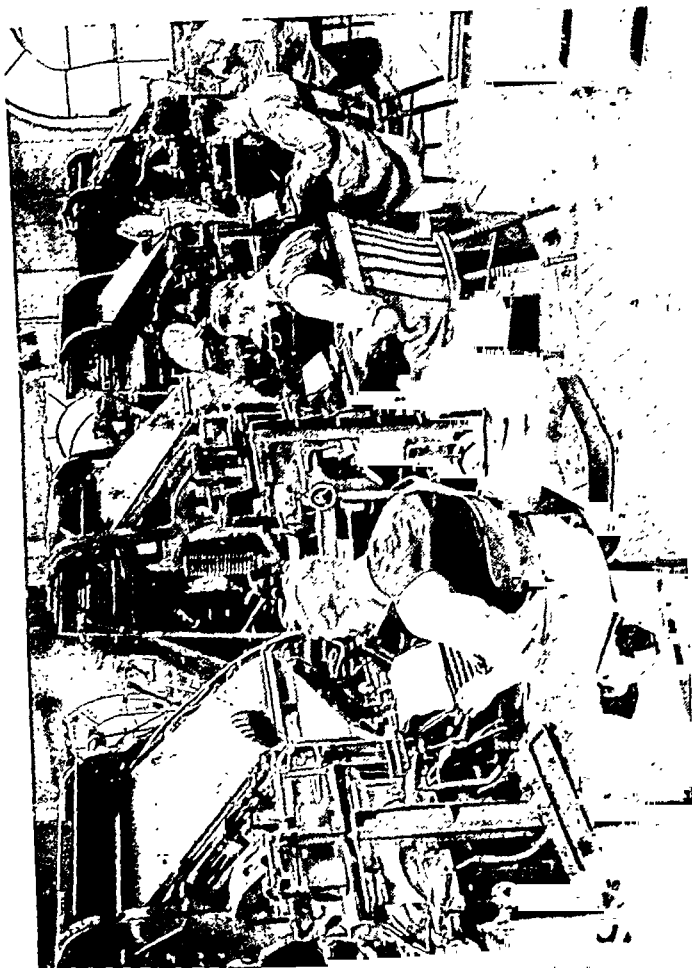
be able to read the page in forme as it lies on the stone. This may seem a commonplace, but the simple truth is that there are countless able men intimately concerned with the executive side of newspaper production, who cannot do this, and who, as a matter of common practice, hinder men engaged upon rush jobs, perhaps, by asking them to explain.

### Reading Type

There, again, there is no need to make a fetish of it. Reading type upside-down is not difficult; it is only a matter of practice, and does not make an indifferent man into a good one. Indeed, the writer admits that he cannot read a page in type from the position in which the stonehand stands—which is what he ought to be able to do—but he does not find it difficult to do it from the other side of the stone—which the average stonehand finds awkward—because it is from that angle that he has learnt it in the course of his daily experience.

There are analogies in other parts of the industrial field. The executive heads of large technical organizations are generally engineers, but it is not expected of them that they shall be able to do with their own hands the precise jobs which are required of workmen in the service of the organization.

They know how the job is done, but their business is to see that such detailed processes are done properly in a reasonable minimum of time. They could not themselves maintain the minimum, nor could they do the job probably in a workmanlike manner. So it is with the newspaper man whose business it is to see that the mechanical processes are carried out. He must have a working knowledge in order to be ready for the person, existing in newspaper offices as elsewhere, who is ever ready with the suggestion that a particular requirement is an impossibility; and for another important reason, that there shall be a reasonable timetable



A BATTERY OF LINOTYPE MACHINES



for particular operations. But it is not required of such persons that they shall assist in imposition, because if they try they will only get in the way and delay the very processes which they are mistakenly trying to hasten.

### Moral Authority

And so it is in regard to the later processes of newspaper production. What executive has not met the technician who will talk learnedly of recondite matters under his charge in an endeavour to avoid some task which may present difficulty? Such are common enough. And, of course, sufficient knowledge is required to be able to deal with such contingencies without loss of dignity, and with that moral authority which is based on a wide understanding.

Especially is it necessary in dealing with the complexities of newspaper mechanics for the journalist who holds executive authority to cultivate that open mind which will the better fit him to deal with the relations between departments. There is really more in this point than at first appears. The first need in processes which must be carried through at high speed is that there shall be complete co-operation between departments. In some mechanical processes this may not be so urgent as in newspaper production, but there is no reason why this close linking-up should not be as complete as it is in regard to the manufacture of motor-cars in certain organizations which need not be identified by name.

### A Twisted Outlook

Unless the executive person knows the precise reason for hitches, and can accurately place his finger upon the man with the twisted outlook who is responsible for them, the hindrance of which he is conscious cannot be removed with certainty. Inter-departmental jealousies are the silliest things in the world, and it may be that they are no commoner on newspapers, and in big printing organizations which



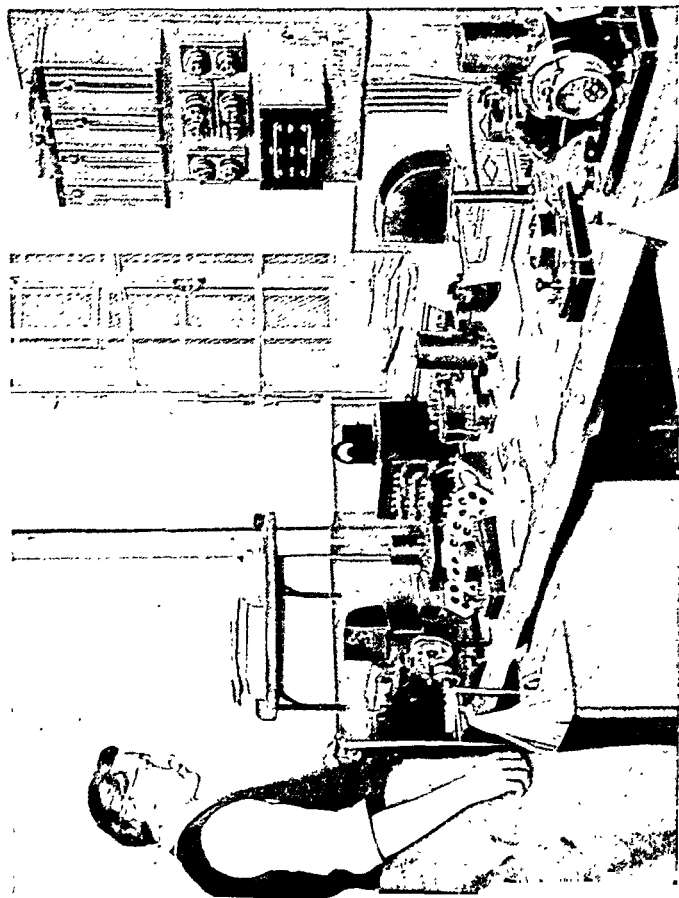
handle the output of the periodical Press, than elsewhere, but it is common knowledge that they exist. It will be the comment of the instructed critic that good management will avoid it.

Maybe, but it often happens that men who are capable of setting up what is in their view the perfect organization, on paper, have not the time and sometimes lack the inclination to see that their careful plans are handled with a proper appreciation of their psychological implications.

### The Books

Let this matter be approached from another angle. Conditions, not unlike those indicated, obtain, though in a much less pronounced fashion, in the other departments. The journalist who has learned his own trade properly; who is a lettered man; a man of the world; who touches life at all those points at which he is expected to make contact, cannot be expected to acquaint himself with the intricacies of the special system of book-keeping, for instance, which obtains in his office, but he must be able to read the books properly—and thousands of journalists cannot do this—and he must understand the analyses submitted to him from time to time, for these are the final and precise proofs that the policy which he is following, whether it be of his own fashioning or not, is right or wrong.

The principle applies no less to the advertising side of newspaper production. There is a precise technology in this matter involved in a language all its own and not easily understandable, which the executive journalist must know something about. He may not be a match in persuasiveness with the representative of an advertising agency, but he must know the connotation of his language, and must have a full understanding of the relations between the advertising profession and the business of newspaper production. Let him not neglect to attend to his education in these matters.



### THE CREED ROOM

Where news is received by the high-speed Morse telegraphy system.



### PUNCHING CREED MESSAGES

This is how duplicated editions are made possible. Editorial and advertising matter is transmitted by high-speed telegraphy from one office to another.

## CHAPTER XXII

### IN THE CREED ROOM

THE first technical process that enters into the making of a newspaper is that concerned with the telegraphic receipt of news. The type of installation used varies according to the size of the office, the amount of traffic dealt with, and the speed with which it has to be handled. In addition to the plant used for receiving agency news, special installations are also employed in some of the big daily newspaper offices for transmitting the matter used in the duplicated editions published in northern towns.

The Creed high-speed Morse system is largely used for both purposes. The method of operation is briefly this: At the sending station messages are prepared by operators on machines which resemble typewriters. Their function, however, is to perforate tape in accordance with the Morse code. The tape is then passed through a Morse transmitter, which sends the signals via the telegraph lines at speeds up to 200 words per minute. At the distant station the signals are received on a Creed Receiving Reperforator, which reproduces them in the form of a perforated tape, identical in every respect with the perforated tape prepared at the sending station. The tape is then passed through a Creed Morse Printer, which transliterates the perforations and prints the messages in roman characters on a paper tape, or in page form, according to the type of instrument used. The Morse Tape Printer works at speeds up to 150 words a minute, and the Page Printer at about 100 words per minute.

An extension of the system, known as the Creed Murray Multiplex, makes it possible to transmit and receive a number of messages simultaneously over one line. An interesting

development recently has been the simultaneous transmission of both ordinary news-matter and pictures.

### Creed Copy

The principal news-distributing agencies, such as the Press Association and the Central News, use the Creed high-speed system, and every sub-editor is familiar with Creed "copy." In it the recognized Press abbreviations are employed, which adds considerably to the speed with which it is transmitted and received. Its accuracy depends, of course, upon the skill and care with which the operator at the transmitting end has "punched" the matter dealt with. Small errors made in this way generally reveal themselves by the association of the words in which they occur with the context of the message. In case of doubt which is not so easily cleared up, the point is queried by the sub-editor, and, by means of a hand-operated Morse key circuit, which connects him with the transmitting station, the operator in the office Creed room asks for a "re-punch."

In provincial offices, practically all the foreign and home news is received in this way, and it is necessary for every sub-editor to be able to deal quickly and accurately with Creed "copy." Generally, three or four big towns are on the same Creed circuit, and the same item is received simultaneously in each office, although some matter is transmitted, as needed, to meet the special needs of one office. Whilst the shorter items are received complete, others come through a portion at a time, and a batch of "copy" received in the sub-editor's room may consist of additions to a dozen different stories, with a slip or two of cricket scores or other sporting information. This has to be quickly sorted out and diverted into its proper channel.

### How Stocks are Handled

The first slip of a news story received over the Creed installation from a news agency bears headlines for the

guidance and assistance of the sub-editor who has to deal with it, and each succeeding slip generally has a "catch-line" or a serial number. The news received in this way embraces every type of matter, including Stock Exchange quotations. For this purpose specially-prepared sheets are used. Each item of stock quoted has its own abbreviation, and when the quotations are received over the Creed installation they are affixed to the places provided on the sheet, which is then ready to be sent out to the news composing department.

"Copy" received from the Page Printer, which is largely used in newspaper offices, is, as the name implies, in page form. The tape received through the ordinary Morse Tape Printer, is, of course, broken into convenient line length and affixed to slips of copypaper before it is passed to the sub-editor's room. With the Page Printer this is not necessary.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### IN THE NEWS COMPOSING-ROOM

MANY of the older school of journalists who are still actively engaged in the craft have a sound knowledge of the technique of newspaper production. Not a small number of them, in fact, graduated from one or other of the several mechanical departments. Not a few of them first smelt ink in the composing-room of a country newspaper, learning their "case" and setting many columns of news-matter before they passed on to the department which supplies it. This entry into journalism was at one time fairly common, but it is not so to-day. At the same time, the beginner who has the opportunity and the facilities at his disposal is well-advised to spend a preliminary period on the mechanical side. If he is not able to do so, then he should seize every opportunity of gaining as much technical knowledge as possible by personal questioning, observation, and the study of a number of suitable textbooks. He should, at least, learn something of typography, including the names and the styles of types, the elements of type-setting, and the modern methods of make-up and display.

#### Modern Make-up

Modern newspapers have a definite style of news presentation, and a regular scheme of make-up. Certain founts of type are used for headlines, and in order that there may be no confusion and no difficulty in their sub-editorial departments, it is customary to issue an office style book, in which all the styles of headlines regularly used are clearly arranged and indicated. By this method it is ensured that all copy goes out to the composing-room suitably headlined, and that no difficulties are likely to arise in setting or make-up. If

this were not done, sub-editors would be constantly writing headlines which the linotype operators would be unable to set because they would not fit.

Indeed, one of the main difficulties in sub-editing is to construct a headline which is bright and informative, and at the same time does not contain too many letters to the line. The three- and four-letter verbs which are so numerous in the English language are the sub-editor's greatest blessing.

### Training Sub-editorial Faculties

In this connection it may be emphasized that the young journalist cannot begin too early to train his own sub-editorial faculties, particularly in the construction of headlines. In some offices it is a rule that reporters must supply their own headlines for the guidance of sub-editors. In offices where this is not done, it is excellent practice for a young reporter, who is really interested in his work, to supply headlines in this way when he has the time to do so. If he has the faculty for doing good work of this kind, it is often found to be a short cut to the sub-editor's table. This is merely mentioned to emphasize the desirability of the young reporter acquainting himself thoroughly with the technique of sub-editorial practice in his own office. He should study the office style in relation to headlines and display, and lose no opportunity of getting an insight into composing-room and make-up methods.

In this chapter will be given a necessarily brief survey of composing-room equipment and its operation in so far as it has contact with the everyday work of the journalist.

### Type-setting Machines

The evolution of the modern daily newspaper may be said to date from the advent of the type-setting machine. Before its introduction all news-matter had to be set by hand, a slow and laborious process which necessitated the employment of



a large staff of compositors. There are several kinds of type-setting machines. Those most largely used in this country are the Linotype, the Intertype, and the Monotype. The first two are used in the majority of daily newspaper offices. Each of these two machines sets up type in lines, a line being technically known as a "slug." The latest models of both of these type-setting machines will set not only ordinary news-matter, but also headlines and advertisements.

Generally speaking, there is not a great deal of difference in the method of working each of these machines. The operator sits in front of a large keyboard, and a depression of each key releases a brass matrix from the magazine. A matrix is, in effect, a small mould in which is cut a letter, figure, or punctuation mark. As the machine is operated, these matrices slide into the assembly mould of the machine, and as each line is completed, molten metal is forced into the single-line mould which they form, and the result is the casting of a line of type. These lines of type, or "slugs," slide down, one after the other, into the container of the machine, from which they are subsequently lifted by the operator for the pulling of a proof and correction by the reader. The matrices are subsequently re-introduced automatically into the magazine for further use. The metal used for casting the "slugs" can also be used over and over again.

### "Justification"

Some people rather loosely compare the type-setting machine to a glorified typewriter. In the result which they produce there is one essential difference. A page of type-written matter will always be found to start "even" on every line, but each line ends unevenly. In setting type it is essential that the lines must not only start evenly but end in the same way. This is technically known as "justification." It is done very cleverly by the use of spacebands,

which are narrower at the top than they are at the bottom. One portion of the spaceband slides over the other, and the bands in this way act automatically as wedges, which force the matrices out to the fullest extent the line will allow.

The Monotype differs from other type-setting machines in that each letter is cast separately. The working principle is also different, the Monotype being actually two machines in one, the keyboard unit and the casting unit. When the keyboard is operated perforations are made in a reel of paper attached to the machine. When the reel is full it is detached from the machine and affixed to the caster, which it operates pneumatically, each letter being separately cast.

Type-setting machines are now a common feature of news composing-rooms. These machines, one of which a great deal used is the Monotype Typecaster, cast types of all sizes from specially-made matrices. A matrix is placed in the machine, which then proceeds automatically to cast the letter which is cut in the matrix, until stopped. The type cast is placed in case, and wears well in headline or advertisement use.

### Artists in Types

The modern type-setting machine is a wonderfully ingenious contrivance, and it does practically every kind of composition work, including feature headlines and elaborate advertisement display. It is, indeed, no exaggeration to say that the mechanical equipment of the news-room is to the news editor and the feature editor what the palette is to the artist. Both these members of the newspaper staff are, to a great extent, artists in the use of types, borders, and the fancy effects in the setting of type which modern equipment has made possible.

There never was a greater range of type faces to choose from than that which is at the disposal of newspaper men to-day, and the more imagination that is employed in making use of them the greater the effect achieved. A study of the

big daily newspapers over a short period will show that efforts are constantly being made to invent new headline effects. These are mostly attained by a careful study of the facilities which the various type-setting machines provide.

In addition to the machines which are used for ordinary news-setting, most modern news-rooms have equipment for the mechanical setting of type of a larger size than that generally handled by the machines already described. A machine much used to-day, particularly for advertisement setting and for the composition of streamer and banner lines and big headlines, is the Ludlow. This method is a combination of hand-setting and automatic casting. The matter is set up in a special "stick," brass matrices taking the place of the type ordinarily used in hand-setting. The completed stick is then adjusted in the caster, which, in a few seconds, turns out a cast line. In many offices quite a large proportion of headlines are now Ludlow set.

### Setting Headlines

It may be mentioned, in passing, that the practice with regard to the setting of headlines varies considerably. A good deal, of course, depends upon the capacity of the news-room plant, but this is not always the determining factor. There is, for instance, at least one London paper which sets most of its headlines by hand. The visitor, who may express surprise at this fact, is simply asked: "Do you know a quicker method?" This question is prompted by the fact that there are definite limits to the time-saving capacity of type-setting machines when large types are being handled. Above the pointage which can be incorporated in the magazine of the machine itself, it is necessary to have auxiliary cabinets containing brass matrices, which have to be set by hand by the operator, and dropped into the assembly mould of the machine, which simply casts the line. The disadvantage of headlines set by hand from type-founder's

type is the possibility of the latter being easily "pied" whilst it is being dropped into a page, or when a page is being re-arranged. Type set mechanically in lines is more conveniently handled, and is not easily disarranged. It is, too, always new type, for the matrices which are used stand up to a great amount of wear without showing signs of use. The result is that clear, sharp printing is always achieved, and the effect is not spoilt by the creeping into use of an occasional broken letter.

### Rush Jobs

When extreme speed in setting a headline is required, however, such as often occurs when a big story breaks just before press time, it is generally the practice to set it from case, the headline being split up into "takes" and divided amongst several men. It is doubtful if at the moment there is any method which enables setting of a given headline to be done quicker. Under ordinary circumstances, when pressure of time and speed is merely normal, the mechanical setting of headline matter has obvious advantages, and the firms which specialize in type-setting equipment are constantly bringing out new improvements. Research and experiment are always going on, and there can be little doubt that the news composing-room of twenty years hence will contain many contrivances at present undreamed of, which will make still further for speedy newspaper production.

The modern composing department has generally a separate section for dealing with advertisements, both display and classified. In large offices the classified (i.e. the small "want," etc., advertisements) have a section to themselves, with an advertisement overseer, and stonehands who are responsible for the accurate classification of the advertisements and their make-up in their own special pages. In this connection, by the way, it may be pointed out that there are many provincial newspapers which publish a far greater

volume daily of these advertisements than many of the London daily newspapers. Some of the provincial journals carry two, three, or even four pages of small advertisements every day. There are also many provincial newspapers which regularly publish an even greater number than this.

### Proof Correction

An important aspect of the news composing-room routine is that with which the readers' department is specially concerned, i.e. the correction of proofs and the prevention of error. Whenever copy is set in type, a proof is pulled, and this, with the original MS., goes to the readers' department, where a reader and his assistant compare the proof with the copy, the reader marking on the margin of the proof corrections of any errors which are noted. The greater number of these errors are caused by the operator striking the wrong key. These are technically known as "literals."

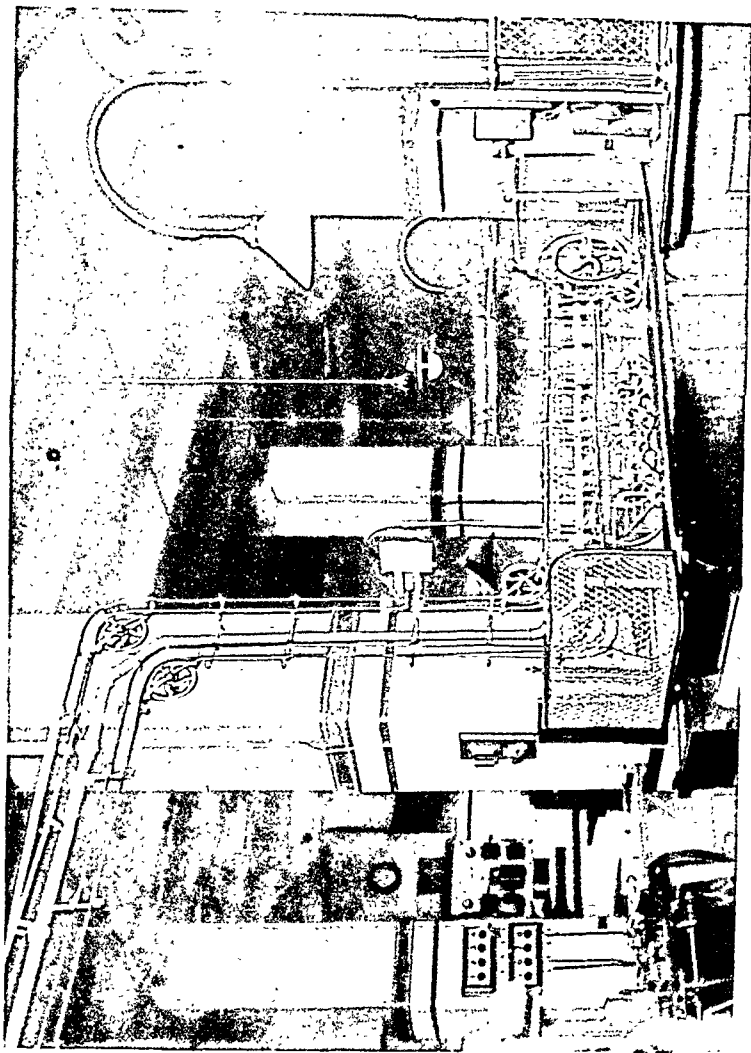
Other sources of error are the mis-reading of copy (sometimes handwriting is inclined to be illegible), the omission of a number of words, or the setting of an error in grammar or syntax which has escaped the vigilance of the sub-editor. Sometimes, too, the reader detects a contradiction of fact which has not been previously observed. In fact, all sorts of errors are liable to reveal themselves when the matter is actually in type, and an intelligent and observant reading staff is a great asset to a newspaper.

When the proof has been marked by the reader, it goes back to the lino-operator who has originally set the type, and for every line in which he has made an error he has to set a new one. Then another proof is pulled, which is known as a "revise," and this has again to be scrutinized in the readers' department to make sure that the original mistakes have been corrected by the operator. Sometimes, when important late matter has to be rushed into type, it is not possible for it to be revised. In extreme cases of



## THE WATCH DOGS

A corner of a Readers' Room, in which all matter is carefully corrected before being passed for press.



### PICK-UP INSTALLATIONS

In many offices pick-up installations are used for conveying proofs and copy from the Overseer's Desk in the Composing Room to the Readers' Room, and for other inter-office purposes.

urgency, matter is sometimes used without being "read," but this does not occur very often in these days when newspaper processes have been so tremendously speeded up.

### Preventing Error

Whilst dealing with the subject of corrections, it is not out of place to explain that the possibility of preventing the publication of an unfortunate error does not end when the page of type has been cast into a plate for the printing machine. Errors which take the form of a simple misprint, such as the setting of a wrong word, can either be obliterated on the flong from which the plate is to be cast, or can be chipped out from the plate when it has been cast. Sometimes small errors of this kind can have serious consequences if they are allowed to be printed, especially if they occur in police court reports, and this method is often adopted to prevent their appearance without the necessity of re-casting a page.

In the event of a really bad misprint occurring, involving several lines of type, it is customary, if the edition is due for publication, to chip these lines from the plates with which the edition is started, the page being subsequently re-cast, and fresh plates substituted as soon as possible. There have been occasions, of course, when whole editions of newspapers have had to be withdrawn from sale, but this catastrophe is happily very uncommon.

### News-room Organization

The organization of a news composing-room varies according to the type of office. In large offices its supervision is generally part of the duties of a works manager, under whom, as the direct supervisor of the work, is an overseer, who in turn has the assistance of a number of assistant overseers. Where the office is sufficiently large for further divisions of responsibility, the latter is generally assumed by workers



known as "clickers," this term being used in a printing office to describe a man who acts in the capacity of foreman. Thus, in a large advertising composing department, sections may be directly supervised by "clickers."

It is the overseer, however, who assumes full responsibility for the work done in the composing-room, and for the smooth and efficient working of the cogs which are the connecting motive link between the editorial department and the composing department it is necessary that there should be a complete understanding between those who are in charge of both departments. In the average office the liaison man is the news editor, who is in constant contact with the overseer. It is these two who have always to work together to overcome the numerous difficulties which arise during a normal day. This aspect of the contact between these two heads of departments has already been emphasized in the chapter dealing with the work of the news editor.

### Journalist and the News-room

There are many interesting aspects of composing-room routine as they affect the work of the journalist. One of them is the method of dealing with copy as it reaches the department. In an office of average size its distribution is generally the work of an assistant overseer, who, at the same time as he gives out copy, keeps a record of the subject and the operator to whom it has been given.

Dealing with the ordinary matter is a simple process, but when a long report is being handled, such as that of a murder trial or of a big disaster (known in newspaper offices as a "running" story, to which additions are constantly being made), considerable care has to be taken. In order to expedite the setting of the copy it is divided into what are known as "takes," one being given to each operator. The shortness of the "takes" corresponds to the speed with which the copy is required to be set.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### MAKING UP THE PAPER

A PRACTICAL knowledge of make-up on the "stone" is of the greatest value to every journalist. It is not too much to say that some knowledge of make-up is indispensable, because, if he is out to seek every opportunity of advancement in a large newspaper office, the time is bound to come when his work will bring him into a sphere of responsibility where the supervision of make-up will be one of his duties.

"Make-up" may be said to be the architecture and the construction of the newspaper rolled into one. Whilst in large offices the preliminary planning of the day's paper may be possible to some extent, particularly in regard to feature and special pages, the actual building up of the main news pages is largely a last-minute process. It is obvious that the selection of the lead stories (i.e. the news items which are given the most prominent position) must be delayed as long as possible in order that the stories so chosen may be not only the best, but also the latest available at the time of going to press. Organization and a duly ordered routine are vitally necessary, and the times of going to press with various editions must be adhered to rigidly. Thus, those who are concerned with the actual building up of a daily newspaper are faced with the problem of working regularly to practically the last second of a fixed time limit.

#### Choosing "Lead" Stories

In the case of the London offices, where papers of huge circulation are published daily, the choice of the leading news stories, and of the relative importance to be given to them in regard to position, is decided at editorial conferences, presided over by the editor-in-chief and attended by his

immediate assistants. The need for later conferences is determined by the rapidity with which the news situation changes during the day, and particularly during the last few hours which precede the "putting to bed" of the day's issue. In smaller provincial offices the responsibility for selecting the lead stories is often shared by the news editor and the chief sub-editor.

In order that a newspaper may be efficiently made up, it is necessary, first of all, that a careful record must be kept of news matter which has passed from the sub-editors' room to the news composing department. By this means it is possible, as the earlier pages are made up, to choose the best of the matter available for them. A preliminary sifting of news stories takes place as they come into the sub-editors' room, and on their importance is decided the type of headline to be given to each. As this is done regard must be paid to the general lay-out of the paper and the number of items with certain types of headlines required for each.

The general practice to-day is greatly to vary the types of headlines given to stories at tops of columns, particularly on main news pages. This is considered to give a bright make-up, and at the same time to allow greater scope in "splashing" a variety of news matter. In this respect the news pages of the modern newspaper present a conspicuous contrast with those of only a few years ago. The modern method means that much more attention has to be paid to make-up than formerly. To some extent, however, it has the effect of simplifying the actual process of making-up, for the reason that a story determines its own position in a page by the type of headline which it carries. Nevertheless, make-up requires careful attention from those who are supervising it.

### Feature Pages

The make-up of special pages, such as those containing editorial feature articles, as well as others on which special

## UNPARALLELED SCENES OF REJOICING

# THE CHIEF

[illegible][illegible]

**LATENT DATE INDEX**



matter regularly finds a place, is a comparatively simple matter. The main consideration is to achieve an artistic effect, and at the same time to preserve balance. In large offices, including many of those in the provinces, it is now the practice to use a good deal of artists' material for brightening feature pages. Drawings are often used in conjunction with special display types to give artistic headings, and much use is also made of drawn and photographic illustrations.

It is generally possible to make up special pages fairly early, but even so it may be necessary to take them over again to substitute a special article which a news happening of exceptional interest has made strongly topical. The young journalist cannot be urged too strongly to study plenty of examples of this style of make-up. A few pence spent in newsagents will provide an armful of specimens. An even less expensive alternative is to spend an hour in the news room of a public library.

### The News Pages

In the make-up of news pages the time factor is more pressing, and in the case of the late news pages the work has generally to be done under rush conditions. There are certain main considerations to be borne constantly in mind by the editorial supervisor. His first duty is to see that the late news stories are given their proper positions, and also to make sure that "running" stories are brought up to date before the page is sent to the stereotypers.

Often alterations have to be made to a story whilst the page is actually being made up on the stone. It may happen, for instance, that a "splash" story has already been given a special introduction, and in this case the "intro," as it is called, generally consists of a précis of the facts contained in the news matter which follows it, and it is also generally set in larger type. A few minutes before the page is due to be

locked up a brief message may come in which alters entirely several aspects of the story, necessitating not only a considerable alteration in the subject-matter but a hurried re-writing of the summarized introduction. It may even be necessary for the headlines to be entirely re-set. In extreme cases, where there is no time for this to be done, the alternative is to let the page go and to use the later message in the late news box. With the increasing competition between newspapers, however, and the great importance of keeping the news pages right up to the minute in the news matter they contain, every endeavour is generally made to keep running stories up to date in the actual page.

### Watching the "Random"

It is generally the responsibility of the overseer to see that late matter is in type in time for the pages for which it is intended, but the news editor, chief sub-editor, or sub-editor who is supervising make-up, generally finds it a useful safeguard to cast an eye over the matter on the random (the place where the type is kept on galleys awaiting use) or even over the matter which the linotype operators are actually setting just before a late news page is due to go to the foundry. Even in the best regulated offices it is curious how often a few lines of important matter will hide themselves up to the very last minute of going to press.

Too much care cannot be taken in altering the matter when it is actually in the forme on the stone. Sometimes exigencies of make-up require that an apparently unimportant paragraph of a news story shall be deleted in order that the matter may fit in the column. When this is done care must be taken to see that there is no reference in the headlines to the fact which has been removed.

This is one of the commonest sources of error in newspaper pages, the result being that the reader reads something in

a headline and is quite unable to find anything to which it relates in the story itself.

### “ Run-over ” Stories

In the making up of the news pages it is now a common practice to run a story over from one page to another. This is done especially frequently in offices which publish their papers in the tabloid page size. In the *Star*, for instance, and the *Evening Standard*, which is slightly larger than the former in its page size, it is a common practice to open the leading news stories on the front page, and to continue them inside. Sometimes on an inside page are found the continuations of three or four news stories. In the case of a paper of the size of the *Star* more than one page is made up in the same forme, and thus the continuation of a story from the front to the back page is a fairly simple matter. But when inside pages are being dealt with the process of making-up is not so easy when the continuity of stories is broken.

Even in the case of papers with full-sized pages stories are often run over from one page to another. When make-up of this kind is being dealt with the first consideration is to see that the story is broken off conveniently and not in the middle of a sentence, and that it ends with the line “Continued on page —.” The second consideration is to see that the continued portion on the other page is clearly linked up by a suitable headline. The most common method is to repeat the first headline of the original story with a small line underneath “Continued from page —.”

The best method of obtaining a practical insight into the processes of make-up is to take every opportunity of watching a newspaper being made up on the stone. It is a mistake for the young journalist to avoid contact, as some of them do, with the mechanical departments. Every little bit of knowledge that can be acquired will prove valuable at some time or other, and the beginner should cultivate a



healthy curiosity in regard to all that takes place in those departments which are not immediately his own concern, but which are a vital part of the newspaper machine. Make friends with the overseer, get to know the stone-hands, pass the time of day with the lino operators, and above all, never hesitate to ask questions concerning anything you do not understand.

## CHAPTER XXV

### IN THE FOUNDRY

THE stereotyping department, or "the foundry," as it is generally called, provides a very important link between the setting in type of newspaper matter and its actual printing on rotary presses. Its special function is to convert the flat formes of type, which it receives from the news composing-room, into semi-cylindrical plates which can be attached to the rotary presses. The method is comparatively simple in operation, but has an important basis of manual skill without which the best results cannot be expected. Briefly, it is as follows.

A sheet of papier mâché (or a "flong" as it is termed) having been placed on the face of the forme of type, it is passed through a matrix mangle, the rollers of which operate under great pressure. The result of this operation is that the face of the flong receives a deep impression of the type. The larger white spaces in the flong are then "packed" with pieces of felt, and after it has been dried for a few moments, in an oven or in a special rotary matrix drier, it is adjusted in the casting box of the actual plate-making equipment. The latter varies in type according to the size of the office and the plate-producing capacity that is required. In some offices casting plant is used which does the complete cycle of operations automatically in one machine unit. In others the casting is done separately, the shaving, trimming, and boring being done by another self-contained unit. At one end of each plate, as it is cast, is a portion of superfluous metal, which is known as the "tail" (or "sprew"), which is automatically cut off and which then goes back into the "pot" of molten metal.

### Latest Methods

Many improvements in stereotyping practice and equipment have been brought about in recent years, a considerable stimulation to these developments having been given by the greater use of photographic illustrations in newspaper text. One of the greatest changes has been the almost universal adoption of the "dry flong" process in place of the use of the "wet flong," which had subsequently to be placed for several minutes in a steam-heated drying press, a waste of time which cannot be countenanced under modern conditions, when, at certain times of the day, every moment in a big newspaper office is literally worth hundreds of pounds. Special flongs are often used for the moulding of picture pages, which require a little more attention than an ordinary news page if really good results are to be achieved. In some cases, when time is not urgently pressing, as in the case of weekly newspapers, the backs of plates of picture pages are specially packed in order to assist in a good printing result. In this connection it may be mentioned that considerable progress has been made by a process in which the half-tone plate itself is attached to the printing plate instead of being incorporated in the forme prior to the moulding of the flong. A special adhesive is used for this purpose, and even under the speed stress of a fast-running rotary press the half-tone plate is securely retained in position. It is obvious, however, that the usefulness of the method is considerably curtailed by the fact that a separate half-tone plate is required for attachment to each printing plate in use. This is scarcely possible when dozens of plates have to be cast for the printing of a single edition, often with only a few seconds to spare.

### Foundry Problems

Like every other department, the "foundry" has its own problems and its own special difficulties with which the



WHERE THE PLATES ARE MADE

A busy scene in the Stereotyping Foundry in a large office.



## A PUBLISHING DEPARTMENT

Where the papers are handled previous to dispatch.

executive newspaper man is often brought intimately into contact. Variations in temperature sometimes cause difficulties in casting, although the provision of "stand-by" plant—which is a very necessary precaution in a daily newspaper office where the time factor is so important—is generally sufficient to overcome them.

Plate blemishes, which cause bad printing, may result from several different circumstances. Skilled operatives can generally detect a really bad fault, such as a noticeable "sink" (or depression) in a plate before it is allowed to go into the press room; others are seen when a few copies of early pages are "run off" on the presses. In the case of late news pages, which are rushed into the press room just as the edition is due to be printed, minor faults may escape notice until the paper is actually printing. In such cases, where the reading matter is not absolutely illegible, the rule is: Catch the first trains and change the plates afterwards.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### IN THE PRESS ROOM

ALTHOUGH the average journalist may not come into personal contact with the equipment of the press room, except under special circumstances, such as his selection for managerial responsibilities, it is important that he should know something of its principles and of its functions. All knowledge is useful, particularly that of industrial processes, and to the young journalist an acquaintance with the technical side of the great industry with which his profession is so closely associated is of special value.

The last few years have seen great improvements in the design and equipment of newspaper press rooms. Since the war, which gave a big impetus to newspaper circulations, the latter have tended to soar to previously unheard-of figures, these big increases being experienced by provincial journals as well as by those published in the metropolis.

#### Expensive Plant

The actual printing equipment of a newspaper office is a very expensive outfit, not only in regard to its initial cost but also in relation to overhead charges. Large sums of money have to be spent to install machinery which actually produces papers during only a comparatively small proportion of the working day. Most manufacturing plants are running for at least eight hours of the twenty-four, and sometimes during a night-shift also, but the newspaper plant in many cases is running for not more than three hours a day. The public-demand conditions upon which the sale of newspapers is based call for speedy production concentrated within a limited space of time. A provincial daily newspaper with a sale of 150,000 copies, for instance, has

to produce at least two-thirds of that number in not more than an hour, and probably in less than that time. One modern rotary newspaper press could produce that number of papers in about three hours, and it would have to be a good "run" to do that. But a daily newspaper cannot afford to spread its printing over so long a period. If it is an evening newspaper it probably starts to print its final edition at about five o'clock, and the publisher has to catch all his important trains and dispatch his motor delivery vans into the suburbs and rural areas by a quarter to six at the latest. The printing-capacity formula, therefore, is a multiplication of press units to give a certain production of newspapers in an hour's "run." It is obvious, too, that there must be a positive surplus to allow for such contingencies as paper breakages and other minor mishaps, and for an even speedier production demanded by special "rush" editions.

In the case of the London daily newspapers, with their huge circulations, the number of presses used is relatively larger, the time factor being even more important because of the wide area of sale and the limits imposed by transport possibilities. It is expensive plant to run largely because it is idle for the greater portion of the working day.

### Types of Presses

There are two types of newspaper printing plant: presses of the "deck" type, in which one unit is built above another, and those of the "line" type, which are built end-to-end on the floor level. Both types have advantages, and their use is largely determined by the space available. Where floor space is restricted "deck" presses are generally in use.

Ever-growing experience in the designing and running of both types of presses has resulted in various modifications and improvements being incorporated which give better printing at faster speeds. Speedier printing has been made



possible firstly by the adoption of new mechanical ideas in the construction of presses, and secondly by the elimination of time-waste in reel-changing and the insertion and changing of late-news matter. On the most up-to-date presses reels are fed in on the magazine principle from below the press, new reels being slipped into position as required by a simple operation. The latest late-news devices are also ingeniously constructed to enable fresh matter to be placed in position while the press is running. It is not necessary here to describe the mechanical operations by which this time-saving feat is accomplished, nor is it necessary to emphasize its value in the operation of a plant which is especially susceptible to time-saving considerations.

### Late-news Devices

The late-news service is a very important feature of press room routine, especially when strong competition has to be met. The sale of thousands of copies of a newspaper often depends upon its being on the streets first with a race result, or some other item of news which is given its importance by a highly transient interest. In a well-organized office, arrangements are made for getting late-news information direct to linotype machines in the press room, or very close to it, so that the "rush" items can be set as quickly as possible and inserted in the "fudge" boxes. Every late-news item must be set for each machine which is to print it, a fact which can put the brake on speedy production where a large plant is concerned. A linotype machine will reproduce a separate "slug" as many times as is required by a simple operation, and special lines are commonly produced in large quantities in this way—but this is naturally a slow process when a large number of presses are waiting for their fudge boxes to be filled.

A new method of overcoming this difficulty is to set the matter once, and from the type to cast as many stereotyped

plates (in miniature) as may be required and fix them in the late-news boxes.

### Keeping "Up to the Minute"

Sometimes, as in the case of a murder trial, it is possible to anticipate intelligently, and to have alternative lines cast ready for dropping into the boxes when the result comes through. Big race results are often handled in the same way, the runners being set in type beforehand and the winners dropped in according to their order of finishing. In some cases, when the newspapers concerned circulate over a scattered area, and are issued from a number of branch offices, more than one late-news space is provided. The additional space is generally on the front or the back page, and special power- or hand-operated printing-in machines are provided for the insertion of late information distributed to the branch offices by telephone.

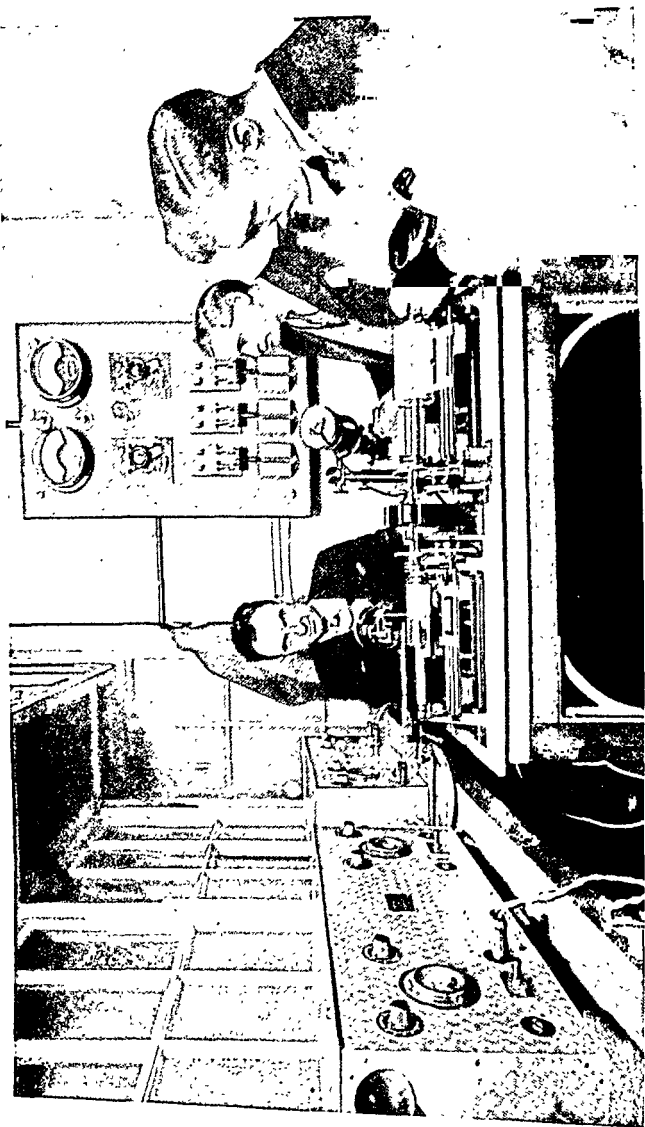
Another method of distributing late information received after the paper has gone to press, now often adopted by the London daily papers, is the free distribution of duplicated bulletins, which are either inserted between the pages of the paper or handed separately to the customer when the paper is sold. These duplicated bulletins made their appearance during the General Strike, when many newspapers were unable to publish in the usual way, and they have been used a good many times since.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### PICTURES BY WIRE

ONE of the most interesting developments in pictorial journalism is the arrival of phototelegraphy, which has made possible the transmission of photographs and other pictures over long distances through the medium of the ordinary telephone wires, and, under more restricted circumstances, by wireless. The radio transmission of photographs requires certain conditions of the ether if the best results obtainable are to be achieved, and so far this method of obtaining photographs of events which have taken place thousands of miles away, mostly in America, is restricted to news happenings of outstanding importance. Pictures of big boxing contests which have taken place in the United States have been obtained very quickly by some of the London newspapers in this way on several occasions.

It is fairly well known that radio transmission of any kind is subject to disturbance when conditions are bad. Every wireless listener is familiar with that troublesome type of interference which is known as "atmospherics" (also described variously by wireless operators as "static," "mush," or "x's"). Interference of this kind, which, when speech or music is being transmitted, causes all sorts of strange noises in a wireless loud-speaker, translates itself into many unwanted variations of light and shade when a picture is being transmitted. When the problem of eliminating interference in radio transmissions has been completely solved, wireless phototelegraphy will have advanced a long way towards perfection. As it is, when conditions are reasonably good, notable results are often obtained. Ordinary land wire phototelegraphy is in daily use by a considerable number of newspapers. Both the *Daily Express* and the *Daily Mail*,



### PICTURES BY WIRE

The Phototelegraphy Room, where pictures are transmitted and received by Phototelegraphy.

PLATE XVII



THE PAPER'S EARS

An Automatic Telephone Exchange in a large office.

for instance, use it for the transmission of photographs for their duplicated editions, and the new Rothermere provincial newspapers also receive pictures in this way. The *Scotsman* claims to be the first British newspaper to have used this method.

### How it is Done

There is more than one system of transmitting photographs by means of an electric current, but the basic principle of them all is very much the same. The most important element—which to phototelegraphy is what the thermionic valve is to the ordinary wireless receiver—is the photo-electric cell (or the selenium cell, as it is alternatively called). This cell is delicately sensitive to variations of light, and can cause such variations to set up correspondingly minute variations in an electric current. At the receiving end of the circuit—the “carrying” medium in between being, of course, the telegraph wire—these variations in the electric current are re-converted into light variations, which, in turn, build up the light and shade of the picture on a photographic film.

The main difficulty is the maintenance of an absolute synchronization between the transmitting and receiving apparatus, for even the smallest deviation at either end will cause imperfections in the reproduced version of the picture. The different systems use their own special means to ensure synchronization, and all of them are efficient when properly operated.

In the transmitting apparatus commonly in use the photograph to be transmitted is affixed to a cylindrical drum and placed in a cylinder, which rotates slowly in the apparatus and allows the picture to be exposed to the action of the photo-electric cell. In some systems a special photograph has to be made for transmission, but in at least one well-known system the original picture, whether it be a photograph or a drawing, can be used in the cylinder.

## SECTION VI THE BUSINESS SIDE

### CHAPTER XXVIII

#### WHAT THE JOURNALIST SHOULD KNOW ABOUT MANAGEMENT

MODERN newspaper management has become almost a profession in itself. Many journalists hold important and remunerative managerial positions both in London and the provinces, and it is well that the ambitious young journalist should gain some knowledge of the responsibilities and the functions of newspaper management. Valuable opportunities often come in that direction. *A good deal of discussion* has taken place as to the relative importance of the editorial and the managerial sides of a newspaper organization, and the increasing influence wielded by the managerial side, particularly in relation to policy, has led to a lot of controversy concerning the "commercialization of the Press."

Modern newspaper production, whether in the metropolis, the big cities, or the larger provincial towns, is carried on in an atmosphere of intense competition. One new feature of present-day competition is that newspaper interests tend more and more to overlap. Not so many years ago, outside London, newspapers had their own definite areas of circulation. Local rivalries existed, but they were limited in their extent. Every newspaper knew just what it had to expect on its own ground. But the circumstances have changed completely. Of one thing only can a newspaper be certain—that it may expect competition from a dozen different sources.

#### Intensive Competition

In addition to their own local competitors, provincial newspapers have now to face the pressure of the "wide area"

dailies, papers published in large centres, and able, by the use of train, motor-van, bus, and sometimes aeroplane transport, to circulate regularly and effectively over an area which may be represented by a circle centred on their bases of a diameter of anything up to 100 miles. These papers may not carry much of the local news of the whole area, but they frequently "stunt" with local specials and pictures, and cannot be ignored.

In competition with both these classes of daily newspapers are the London dailies, including the picture papers, which are showing an increasing tendency to localize when the occasion warrants it. The newspapers with a national circulation nearly all make a speciality of local contents bills when they have stories upon which to base them, and the picture papers are constantly serving suitable areas with local pages of pictures. Then come the popular Sunday papers, often with local specials and nearly always with big competition prizes to offer. All this means intensive competition, from the effects of which even the provincial weeklies do not wholly escape.

### Fight for Circulation

This constant pressure, which means a never-ending fight to gain circulation on the part of the big paper and an equally strenuous struggle to retain it on the part of the smaller ones, raises serious problems for newspaper managers. The "national" papers, of course, have their own special circulation difficulties which they try to overcome in a variety of ways, including the duplication of their plant in one of the northern centres. It is fairly certain that there will be important extensions of this method. It is probable that in a very few years we shall see at least one of the national morning papers making a bold bid for a circulation far in excess of anything yet achieved, with a triplicated or even a quadrupled plant in chosen centres.



This will mean a still greater intensification of newspaper competition.

Circulation and advertisement revenue go hand in hand. The greater the former, the greater the amount derived from the sale of space, and, consequently, the greater the value of the newspaper as a commercial concern. This is the reason why the managerial factor has become so strong.

### The Chief Concern

The first problem and the chief concern of management, therefore, may be said to be the maintenance or the increase of circulation. The organization of the circulation department of the modern newspaper has been extended in a manner which would have been considered impossible a few years ago. As is usual in any industry or business, the intensification of competition has had an inevitable result. That result has been the initiation of all sorts of schemes designed to sell newspapers by providing something more than simply satisfying the news curiosity of the reader. One of the most generally adopted is newspaper insurance. This idea was adopted by the London daily newspapers after it had been tried for many years by some of the popular weekly magazines, and it is now being exploited by provincial journals.

From time to time newspaper insurance has given rise to considerable controversy. Those who oppose it say that it is simply buying circulation. Those who support it argue that it stabilizes circulation. At all events, it seems to have been accepted generally, and has seen considerable variation and extension, including insurance against sickness. The modern daily newspaper, indeed, finds it necessary to adopt an attitude of universal benevolence. It is ready to give expert advice to its readers on all manner of problems, from their legal responsibility for the depredations of straying fowls to the discovery of faults in their wireless receivers.

It is ready to foot the bill if a reader's aerial pole crashes into a neighbour's greenhouse; it is prepared to keep the wolf from the door if a reader is temporarily disabled; and it stands by, ready with open cheque book, in case he suffers from shingles or finds it necessary to be trepanned! Some people may be inclined to doubt if the modern newspaper occupies the old position of guide and philosopher; can anyone doubt that it is, indeed, a friend?

### The Competition Craze

Modern newspaperdom, too, is suffering from a competition craze. Vast sums of money are given away every year as prizes to those who compete successfully in a great variety of contests. These big-prize competitions have spread to the provinces, largely owing to the new phase of newspaper competition which has been experienced of recent years. In some issues, newspapers which have been taking part in this competitive phase of newspaper activity have run half a dozen different competitions in a single issue, the total prize money running into hundreds of pounds.

This aspect of circulation work has created new responsibilities in newspaper management. It means that not only have new methods of stimulating circulation to be thought out and applied, but also that there is constant need of house publicity. The modern newspaper has not only to carry the advertising of other people, but it must constantly advertise itself. It is almost impossible to pick up an issue of any of the popular daily newspapers without finding that it carries a considerable amount of matter relating to itself, its insurance schemes, and its competitions. On the more important newspapers the supervision of this work is allocated to a member of the staff, who is responsible for all house publicity. At the same time, it is the managerial side of the organization which has to bear the ultimate responsibility, and to keep the newspaper abreast of its rivals.

## Administrative Problems

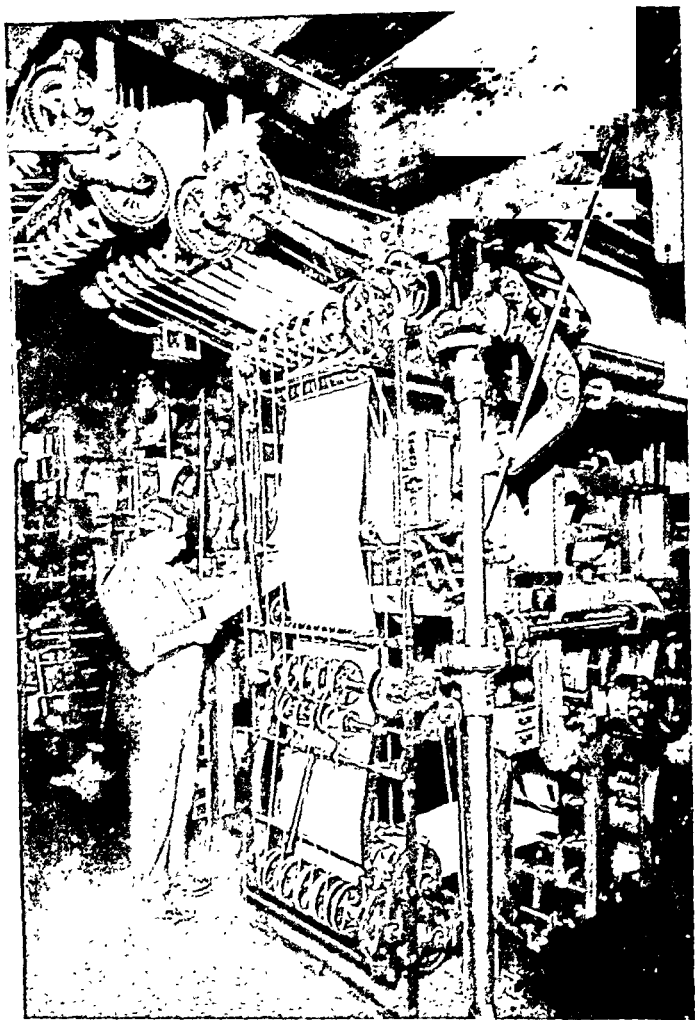
A practical acquaintance with the technique of the editorial side of newspaper production is of the greatest value in newspaper management. This is why journalists occupy so many managerial positions. The editorial side has its own special problems to solve, but some of them are problems which are also closely allied with the function of management. There is, for instance, a good deal more supervision of advertising than there used to be, and it is no uncommon thing for a considerable amount of business to be turned down because the management is not satisfied that it is absolutely *bona fide*, or because of dissatisfaction with the manner in which it is presented.

A newspaper has to spend so much money to-day to gain new readers that it cannot afford to lose them through advertising which does not keep its promises. A dissatisfied reader can do quite a lot of harm. Sometimes a single advertisement may cause much trouble in this way. This aspect of advertising is dealt with elsewhere at greater length; suffice it to say here, that a good many knotty problems come to the managerial executive from the advertising department.

Then there are special problems associated with staff management. Newspaper staffs have increased considerably in recent years, and in big offices it is not uncommon to find the number of employees running into several hundreds when all departments are taken into account. Surrounding the employment of a staff in any kind of business are innumerable legal responsibilities and trade union and commercial obligations, which have to be constantly remembered and carried rigorously into effect.

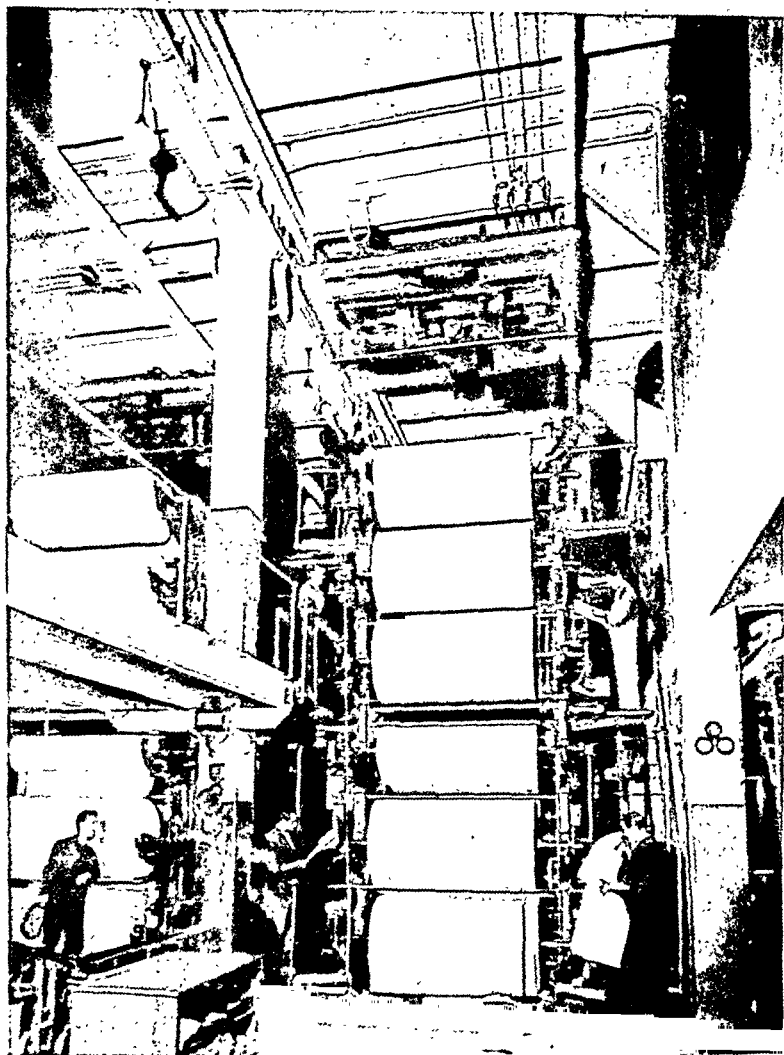
## Scientific Management

All these considerations apply as much to the management of a newspaper as to any other concern. In the building up



### MECHANICAL CONVEYORS

This picture shows the Conveyors which take the papers at high speed direct from the printing presses to the Publishing Department.



### REEL-EATING ROBOTS

A corner of the Press Room in a large newspaper office. Each reel contains approximately between 4 and 5 miles of paper.

of an efficient machine the careful selection of the human element is of the greatest importance. Of recent years much attention has been paid to industrial psychology, and those who control businesses of almost any description, and particularly those which are associated with actual productive processes, now take a practical interest in it.

The principles of scientific management are largely based upon it, and it embraces a wide field of research and observation from which has already been gathered a considerable amount of valuable data. Its application to the editorial side of newspaper work is obviously limited to ordinary considerations of careful organization and supervision, but on the technical side it can be carried further. The study of "time motion," for instance, has already been applied experimentally to the operation of a linotype machine, and has yielded interesting results.

Regard has been paid to similar principles in the "lay-out" of modern newspaper offices, in which the arrangement of the various departments, particularly those concerned with the actual production of the paper, presents an instructive contrast with conditions based on older ideas. Many offices have recently been completely rearranged to bring them into line with modern practice. Much depends, of course, upon the floor space and general accommodation available, and where these are restricted modernization is retarded, and the "forward motion" which characterizes modern processes of production cannot always be applied.

### The Welfare Idea

"Welfare work," which is now so prominent a feature of industrial life, is another new idea which has been taken up, though only to a limited extent, in the modern newspaper office. In some offices it had existed, under the various guises of pension funds, benevolent funds, and thrift schemes, long before industry began to look upon welfare as part and

parcel of its ordinary activities, and there are signs that newspaper firms are giving it a more prominent place in their outlook upon the well-being of those who serve them. *The Times* and the *News-Chronicle* are amongst the newspaper firms which have introduced welfare ideas into their offices. Many provincial offices have also put similar schemes into operation.

The work has many aspects which reflect its usefulness and value in the contribution it makes to the comfort and happiness of those who participate in its benefits. In many cases social halls, canteens, and sports grounds are provided, and are greatly appreciated by those who make use of them. In several offices, too, a "house magazine" is published solely for circulation amongst the staff, and does much to keep alive a healthy spirit of *camaraderie* amongst the various departments and to serve as a useful link between management and personnel.

Committees representative of the employees themselves generally take a considerable share of responsibility on the social side of these schemes, but a judicious supervision of welfare activities and the stimulation of interest in them amongst all grades of employees may be taken as part of the managerial function.

### Health of Employees

The temporary loss of man-power through sickness has long been recognized as a heavy burden on industry, and much valuable investigation has been carried out with a view to its prevention. The common cold must cost the industry of this country well over a million pounds every year. Management to-day keeps a careful eye on the health of its workers, not simply from motives of benevolence, but with an eye to economy of losses as well. Healthy conditions of employment are a prime necessity, and it is a vital duty of the management to see that they are provided. The

different departments of a large printing office have their own special needs in regard to ventilation and safeguards against ailments incidental to the work which is carried on.

In addition to the provision of such safeguards as are dictated by common sense and ordinary consideration for the comfort of the staff, it is part of the duty of a newspaper executive to see that all the exacting statutory requirements in regard to conditions of employment, accident precautions, etc., are carried into effect.

### Buying Supplies

An important aspect of managerial work, especially in a large office, or in the headquarters office of a firm publishing a number of papers, is that of the buying of supplies. Newspapers of large circulations use up a tremendous amount of paper, ink, and other commodities, and it is necessary that these should not only be purchased economically but that their quality should be maintained. Poor paper can cause quite a lot of trouble in the press room, particularly when the reeling is badly done.

With good paper "breaks" are not very common, but a really bad reel has sometimes to be taken from the press in which it is running and replaced by a new one. Inks of poor quality can also detract from the printing appearance of a paper. It is of great importance that a paper should be well printed, not only to give satisfaction to the reader, but (and this may be considered a more vital consideration) also to satisfy the numerous advertisers. Large numbers of them pay big sums for the space they buy, and poor printing may cause serious complaints to be made through the advertising department.

The maintenance at a constant standard of efficiency of the mechanical equipment of the works is a matter for careful managerial supervision. It may embrace a variety of detail, from the replacement of a worn-out magazine of



linotype matrices to the purchase of new rotary presses. Mechanical equipment must necessarily keep pace with all demands due to increased advertising appropriation and larger circulation, and when a newspaper is growing rapidly in this way this side of managerial work is one which requires much care.

### Newspaper Accountancy

The accountancy side of a large office is handled by a separate department. Most companies have a secretary, who is responsible for the financial aspect of the firm's business in so far as it affects insurances, supervision and checking of the books, preparations for audit, preparation of balance sheets and dividend warrants, issue of stock and similar work incidental to the conduct of the ordinary business of a company.

From this standpoint the operations of a newspaper company do not differ strikingly from those of any other commercial firm. The accountancy and book-keeping systems are adapted to the special needs of a newspaper business, but on the higher financial plane the methods are essentially those of orthodox mercantile practice, with a skilled executive conducting the business and accountancy sides and a secretarial department carefully supervising expenditure and revenue, and periodically checking the losses and the gains.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### WHAT THE JOURNALIST SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE ADVERTISING DEPARTMENT

ONE of the most important phases of newspaper work to-day, as distinct from the activities associated with the editorial side, is that of the advertising department. Advertising represents the life blood of every newspaper. It provides the revenue which makes the running of a newspaper an economic possibility. The success of the newspaper as a commercial concern is measured by the flow of advertising in its columns. This applies as much to the small provincial weekly as it does to the big national daily. If it were not for the revenue derived from advertising, and if the income of newspapers depended entirely on the return from circulation, newspapers would be but scanty productions as compared with the generous proportion of pages which they give to their readers to-day. The advertising department is, therefore, of vital importance.

One frequently meets with references to "the new journalism," a phrase coined to express the changes which have come over journalistic methods and technique since the beginning of the century. The changes in advertising have also been so great that one might be pardoned a reference to "the new advertising." In the same period advertising has changed in spirit and method as greatly as it has increased in bulk.

#### Modern Typography

One of the great changes that has taken place in Press advertising is reflected in the use of a wider variety of type faces. Variations of the older faces have been called into use, and the typefounders have also risen to the occasion

by providing entirely new ones, many of them very beautiful though definitely modern in design, and some strikingly original though a little grotesque. Modern developments in typefounding have undoubtedly been stimulated considerably by the desire of the advertisement writer to find new media of artistic expression in typography. The typefounders have met the demand with types which do them great credit.

There are apt to be fashions in types, particularly those used in advertising, and certain faces have definite vogues. Cameo, for instance, has had such a vogue. Book publishers, the banks, and the drapers used it first, then other advertisers found it attractive. It afterwards appealed to newspaper men, who found it a useful and artistic variation for the headings for special features on the magazine and literary pages. It was not long before someone found a use for it in ordinary news headings, and it reached the final phase of its exploitation when the Saturday football papers began to use it.

Both copywriters and those who are responsible for the make-up of newspapers have made good use of the new types available. The advertisement artists are often the first to make use of them, their adoption in the feature columns coming later.

### The Artistic Side

Advertisements are now more generally illustrated than ever before. All sorts of media are used—line and wash drawings, photographs, etc. Modern advertising has a strong artistic appeal, which is built up skilfully by the combined use of type, illustration, and white space. Advertisers have learned—largely through the services of the advertising agencies—that the value of space is not a fixed factor but is dependent entirely on the use made of it. This is why most big firms place their advertising in the hands of experts. Few concerns spending any considerable sum

annually in this direction continue to do their own advertising. It thus follows that the advertising departments of newspapers have now to deal mostly with advertising agents. The latter have their own professional organizations.

### How Advertisements Come In

Large space advertisements are received by the advertising department in one or other of these forms—

Copy which has to be entirely set in type.

Copy which has to be partly set and partly made up of blocks or stereotypes supplied by the advertiser.

In matrix form (i.e. in dry flong from which a stereotype plate can be cast).

In stereo or electro form, which obviates the necessity of any casting or setting.

In this latter case the stereo merely has to be mounted and placed in the page forme. The last-mentioned method of supplying their matter is being increasingly used by the agencies. From their point of view it has obvious advantages. The lay-out and general type-scheme of the announcement is automatically standardized in every newspaper in which it appears. The necessity for seeing proofs, in order to make sure that the approved design has been followed is also removed. Whether the advertisement appears in a daily newspaper or a small country weekly it is the same, set in perfect, up-to-date types, and free from blemish. Its appearance cannot be affected by any circumstances due to the restricted composing room equipment of the newspaper which handles it. In short, it can be safely assumed that it will give the maximum return for its cost.

### Saving Costs

From the newspaper standpoint, too, this method has definite advantages. In the first place there are no type

setting costs, which is a big consideration. Secondly, compositors (either hand or machine, or both) are released for other work. In the case of provincial newspapers which have a big daily inflow of local advertisement copy to set this is a double saving. Make-up on the stone is also simplified, as there is no type to be handled or untied, with the attendant possibilities of "pie"-ing and thus losing time.

Advertisements received in matrix form also reduce costs and save time, although in this case, of course, the stereotyping department has to provide casts. Minor difficulties that sometimes arise when advertisements are received in matrix or stereo form are caused by imperfections in the matrix or stereo. Sometimes a matrix is received in a damaged state, or there may be a slight "sink" in a stereo. In such cases the advertisement may have to be wholly or partly re-set. But on the whole the increasing use of these media is welcomed in newspaper offices, and particularly by advertising managers in those offices where the scientific costing system is so detailed that setting costs are debited, for balance-sheet purposes, against the department.

### Another Aspect

On the other hand, there are now considerably increased costs in provincial offices in the setting of local advertising matter. This is due to several causes. In the first place local advertisers have been affected by the changes in the manner and technique of national advertising. They have shown an increasing tendency to copy national advertising, particularly in those new methods of setting and display which older hands are inclined to regard as unorthodox.

In the larger provincial centres the big stores, following the example of those in the metropolis, have their own advertisement writers, who deal exclusively with the local

advertising of their firms, and supply lay-outs which occasionally cause wrath in the composing-room. When these specialists have had actual practical training in typography their demands are generally reasonable, but when they possess only theoretical knowledge a newspaper advertisement manager often finds himself called upon to settle delicate problems that have arisen as between the composing-room overseer and the outside lay-out man.

Sometimes the latter provides an elaborate lay-out built up on approved textbook principles, with every fount of type carefully marked, but a sixth more copy than can be fitted in, even when the lay-out is meticulously followed. This is bound to cause trouble and expense, especially when a big advertisement has to be reconstructed to make space for the surplus matter. With increasing newspaper competition in the provinces newspapers have naturally to give big advertisers considerable latitude, and such re-setting due to their desire to satisfy regular advertisers is a source of loss in time and money.

The intricate nature of the lay-outs supplied by big stores in the provinces, particularly the drapery and furniture stores, has also tended to increase setting costs, and in every way the modern style of advertising has become more costly to deal with as far as the newspaper is concerned.

### The Modern Idea

Even comparatively small local advertisers are taking a great deal more interest in their advertising. They draw up their copy with care, and often specify the types they require to be used. Most of them want proofs before an advertisement is published. So interested, indeed, in the art of advertising are the greater number of advertisers in the larger provincial towns, that many local newspapers offer the special copywriting facilities of their own advertisement

departments to assist their clients. This is a service which is likely to grow in the future.

In addition to the ordinary daily inflow, advertising has its seasonal phases, which result in a considerable amount of additional space being requisitioned. The sales seasons, for instance, have a stimulating effect as far as drapers are concerned, and the requirements of the motor agents are always heavier in the early spring, or just about the period of the Motor Show, when the new models make their appearance. Special calls on advertisement space mean increases in the number of pages, for it is recognized that reader interest must be maintained, and that the amount of space devoted to news, features, and pictures must be proportionately increased. Most newspapers are equipped to meet any unusual demands of this nature.

### **The Stimulative Effort**

Advertising does not come into a newspaper office of its own volition. Like every other kind of business, it has to be carefully stimulated. It is true that there are a great many old accounts on the books of every newspaper, but the new business, especially in the form of local advertising, has to be carefully sought and nurtured, more particularly in a town in which there is a good deal of newspaper competition.

A live staff of outside representatives with plenty of business enthusiasm, whose efforts are judiciously co-ordinated and supervised by an efficient advertising manager, is necessary to show consistent increases in advertisement revenue. The newspaper to-day is pre-eminent as a medium through which to sell almost any description of article, but, since commercial publicity has become almost a fine art, it has a considerable number of powerful rivals, which are being increasingly used when advertising allocations are being made up. In addition, the Press media themselves are

increasing in number, which introduces a further complication. One would not go so far as to say that there is a fight for advertising on the part of newspapers, but there is undoubtedly far more competition than there used to be to secure it.

The advertisement manager of the modern newspaper must be a keen business man, and he must see to it that he is well-known and popular amongst the business men—particularly the traders—of his immediate area. Personality counts greatly in this special newspaper job, and it is a quality no less necessary in the case of the outside representatives, the sellers of "white space," whose method of approach may mean the acquisition or the loss of a valuable account.

### House Publicity

No less important than the house publicity of a newspaper in its own columns is the publicity matter of its advertisement department, consisting of brochures, folders, etc., designed to prove the efficiency of the newspaper as an advertising medium. This is work which has to be done carefully and accurately, for most of it comes under the scrutiny of people who are expert in appraising the sales value of any type of publication. Those people, who consist mostly of advertising agents, sales managers, and the advertising managers of big commercial houses, are keen to appreciate the expert handling of publicity matter.

An effective brochure or a telling advertisement in the pages of one of the advertising journals is a sign of a progressive and alert newspaper. These are people who want to spend money; some of them simply must spend large sums every year. Their standard of success in their own line of business is to discover newspapers which show a good percentage of return for a given amount of advertising. They are always looking for such newspapers, and in this way the special advertising side of newspaper house publicity requires adequate attention.



## A Wide Field

As far as the newspaper is concerned, the field in which advertising revenue may be found is a wide one. Firstly, although most of the big manufacturing concerns place their advertising in the hands of one of the advertising agencies, some continue to do their advertising direct through their own advertising departments. Secondly, not all the big advertising agencies are centred in London; quite a considerable number are to be found in the provincial cities.

The situation, therefore, is somewhat complex. The newspapers best organized to cover every corner of the field are those which get the best business. This fact has led to considerable extension and reorganization of newspaper advertising departments in recent years. In addition to a London representative—who maintains an important business link with advertising agencies and space buyers in the metropolis—some provincial newspaper concerns employ a travelling representative to maintain equally important liaison with similar agencies in other parts of Great Britain.

## Special Problems

Newspaper advertising has its own problems, which give rise to its own special controversies. Generally speaking, the newspaper industry as a whole has been largely commercialized for many years. The rationalization process has followed, and is already well advanced. Methods of production are being standardized, and in the process some degree of unanimity is being introduced into the newspaper outlook in regard to advertising.

There are still wide deviations of policy concerning rates and conditions relating to various classes of advertising, particularly as between national and local announcements, but there are signs that these are being gradually

codified on the basis of circulation, which, after all, is the only sound foundation. These variations in local practice occasionally cause discussion on the part of the various organizations which represent the interests of the advertisers and their agents, and cause various demands to be made, from the universal adoption of net sales certificates to the institution of a national audit bureau of circulation on lines similar to that which functions in America.

Enough has been written in this chapter to show that the work and the special problems of the advertising department are already complex and that their complexity is increasing. We do not feel tempted to invite discussion of any special qualifications of the journalist to control such a department. The fact remains, however, that many journalists become so engaged, with no conspicuous lack of success. There are, indeed, many opportunities on the advertising side for the keen young journalist who is determined to achieve success, and who does not feel an urge to limit the scope of his newspaper activity. It is for this reason that this attempt has been made briefly to indicate what the work is and the kind of temperament and qualifications it requires.

### The Daily Difficulties

The problems of the advertising department are not limited merely to those which bear directly on the selling of "white space"; many others arise when the space has been sold. In a large office, where a big volume of advertising matter is handled daily, difficulties often present themselves in the allocation of positions.

There are certain well-defined principles which are known to affect considerably the "pulling" power of an advertisement, based on the degree of reader-interest which it arouses. It is natural that advertisers or their agents should require their announcements to conform to these principles,

especially in regard to the positions in which they appear. Many advertisers pin their faith to a "solus" position, that is a position right away from any other advertising announcement and almost surrounded by news. Others require that at least the advertisement shall be next to news matter, whilst others stipulate that that matter shall be of a definite nature, such as sporting notes, police court reports, or matter of special interest to women.

People who buy advertising space have varying ideas as to the position which will give them the best value for their money. One may require a space at the top of a column on a right-hand page, while another may stipulate that his announcement shall not appear in front of a certain page in the newspaper, arguing that as a specially popular feature appears regularly on that page, many readers probably turn to it first and then read on to the following pages instead of turning back. In this way a newspaper may create its own special advertising demands, and thus give rise to space allocation difficulties which are peculiar to itself.

With all these individual requirements of advertisers to be met, the advertising manager is often confronted with a problem of some perplexity.

### Advertising "Make-up"

Most newspapers have their own styles of advertising "make-up." Slight variations are sometimes inevitable owing to an urgent demand of the moment, but in the main an endeavour is made to keep rigidly to the advertising scheme. There are two reasons why this is necessary. Firstly, because the arrangement of advertising space is dependent upon the general news make-up of the paper, which is founded on the sound assumption that readers like to know where to look for news or feature items; and,

secondly, because anything but an orderly and regular plan would quickly lead to chaos.

In the larger offices a small "dummy" newspaper is prepared showing the positions news, features, and advertisements are to occupy. In smaller offices the special positions given to display advertisements alone are indicated, it being the responsibility of the advertising department to see that these do not interfere with the news lay-out of the paper.

### Preserving Page Balance

In many offices definite restrictions are placed on the latitude allowed to advertisers in the use of large sizes of types. If this were not done pages would be disfigured by the use of "poster" types out of all proportion to those used by advertisers more susceptible to artistic restraint. Such restrictions sometimes give rise to delicate problems, especially when an advertiser who regularly takes big space shows an inclination to resent them. In such cases tact and diplomacy are needed to prevent the loss of a considerable amount of revenue.

A common feature of newspaper advertising practice is the use of what is known as the "composite" page. This is a page of advertisements founded on a definite idea, such as "Labour-saving in the Home" or "How to Buy a Motor-car," and built up around an article on the subject. Many of the ideas on which such pages are founded are ingenious, and indicate an imaginative advertising executive. The frequency with which such ideas can be utilized depends entirely upon circumstances.

There are conflicting opinions concerning the usefulness of the composite page, both on the part of those who buy advertising and those who sell it. It is no part of the purpose of this chapter to go into the pros and cons of the discussion. It may be said, however, that, despite the fact that there are those who hold that the composite page is decreasing in

popularity, it is still a prominent feature of newspaper advertising, not only in the provinces but also in the London newspapers, which evidently find that it still makes an appeal to advertisers, who, after all, are those upon whom its continuance depends.

The principal argument in favour of the composite page is that it stimulates advertising which otherwise would not be available, by bringing in advertisers who are attracted by the special appeal of the occasion, and who would not advertise under ordinary circumstances. It also links up a definite advertising appeal with a strong reader-interest, and thus satisfies both the advertiser and the reader.

### Watching the "Copy"

An essential part of the duty of an advertising manager is to maintain a ceaseless vigilance in preventing the admission into the columns of his newspaper of any matter which is open to the slightest question, either from the standpoints of propriety or of responsibility for legal consequences. The "propriety" heading may cover a wide range of standards, ranging from the guarantee that the announcement is genuine in its claims and *bona fide* in its implications to the assurance that it is in good taste and is not likely to give offence to readers or to other advertisers.

Under the heading of legal responsibility come problems which are best settled in consultation with the editor and the general manager, ranging from indiscretions in proposed announcements which arise from trade jealousy to those which are definitely malicious in their intent. Actionable statements may creep just as subtly into advertisements as they do into news matter, and must be watched for just as carefully. They may be even more expensive in their consequences if printed, in that they generally concern a company rather than an individual, and a commercial product rather than a personal reputation.

The editor of a newspaper bears a heavy responsibility for the publication of actionable advertising matter, and for this reason the young journalist who aspires to an editorial chair should be as careful to acquire a sound knowledge of advertising pitfalls as of those which he may meet in ordinary editorial matter.

# SECTION VII

## ADVICE OF FAMOUS JOURNALISTS

### A SYMPOSIUM

#### CHAPTER XXX

#### MY ADVICE TO THE YOUNG

#### JOURNALIST

IN this chapter a number of journalists who have attained to eminence in their profession, and whose views on their calling are always received with respect, have kindly given words of valuable advice to readers of this book who contemplate entering journalism.

#### “RESPECT YOUR PROFESSION”

MR. C. P. SCOTT'S ADVICE

Mr. C. P. Scott, the veteran Editor of the *Manchester Guardian*, whose recent retirement was marked by a well-deserved honour, gives the following advice—

I suppose the first duty of the journalist, as of the doctor or the lawyer, is to respect his profession. There must be many different kinds of journalist as of journals, but some precepts apply all round, and this surely is one of them. To begin with, he is a trustee for the language. There are plenty of homes into which books rarely find entrance, but few which never see a newspaper. The English Bible and Shakespeare have established a standard for literary English, but the newspaper goes far to determine the uses of current speech. It can help or it can hinder. Language is more fluid in this country than, for instance, in France. We have no Academy to bless or ban, to admit this or that word or phrase, and to shut the door on that. English thus is a growing language in a sense that some other languages are not, and words, or phrases, are able to acclimatize themselves by a sort of gradual process of elections. America assists,

and many vigorous phrases have crossed the seas, often without our knowledge.

The young writer, the young journalist, must use his discretion, must make his choice. He will shun the cliché, the cheap phrase, yet know where to use it. But that is not enough. For the good of his soul, he should steep himself in the language, as in the thought of the best writers. So at last may he hope to develop a natural and effective idiom of his own.

### FOUR QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

MR. R. D. BLUMENFELD'S QUERIES

Mr. R. D. Blumenfeld is the Chairman and Editor-in-Chief of the *Daily Express*. This is his advice to the beginner—

The young man or woman who believes that there is a successful future in the pursuit of a journalistic career should first make a candid self-examination, with, say, four leading questions that should be answered in the affirmative. They are—

1. Am I prepared to give myself wholeheartedly to the task?
2. Am I naturally, mentally, and physically equipped?
3. Am I industrious?
4. Am I willing to devote a year or two to the elementals of journalism without hope of monetary gain?

If the aspirant can answer these questions without evasion, there is a good chance of success.

My view is that every one who hopes ever to succeed in the calling should be thoroughly grounded. There is no halfway to success. The best method is to secure a place on some well-conducted provincial newspaper where the recruit has every opportunity for practice; where he may do reporting and note writing and even canvassing for advertisements. That is the surest method.

Of course, the knowledge of more than one language helps a great deal, but, above all, the future journalist is one who has read well, has studied hard, and continues to do both.

There is no future in journalism for sluggards, except at the very bottom.



## "GET TO KNOW PEOPLE"

MR. FREDK. PEAKER'S ADVICE

Mr. Fredk. Peaker, M.A., of the *Morning Post*, is an ex-President of the Institute of Journalists. His advice is as follows—

Nine-tenths of good journalism depends on knowing people—the right people. The young journalist would do well to stick to reporting for several years. In no other way can he get to know the precise value of the various public men in his locality. To see and hear the men about whom he may have to write is of the utmost importance, and in later life he will find the contacts he has made in his reporting days of supreme value.

In my view, too, it is of great importance that he should join a club, the best in the town. Don't plead that you can't afford it. There are some things in life that one has to do whether one can afford it or not, and membership of a club, where one meets, on equal terms, people that matter, is one of them. When you are seeking information from the man who has it to give, it is much easier to get it if you are in the habit of meeting him socially than if you have to approach him as a perfect stranger.

Don't specialize too soon. The people in authority in your office will soon discover that you do some jobs better than others, and gradually you will find that sort of work being given to you. The ideal to aim at is to be able to do any job that turns up reasonably well and some jobs extraordinarily well. Then you will find that the jobs you do extraordinarily well—which means those you like best—are generally those given to you, because the editor wants all his work done in the best way.

Then I would say, remember that you have great responsibility, however small the job. You are the eyes and ears of the public, who must see the event you are recording through your eyes. Put your responsibility to the public before even the responsibility you owe to your employer. In that way you will lead a much happier life, and will all the sooner get out of the drudgery and be given more and more responsible work to do.

Finally, I would say that it is a mistake, in your earlier

years, to stop with one paper too long. And, wherever you are, or whatever is your job, try to earn a little extra money by writing articles for papers and magazines that in no way compete with the one on which you are engaged. This will teach you more than anything else about yourself, and it is important in journalism to know yourself as well as other people.

### THE OLD AND THE NEW

MR. W. J. MURPHY'S COMPARISONS

Mr. W. J. Murphy, who recently retired from the staff of the Press Association, may be regarded as the doyen of Fleet Street journalists. Few men have had so wide an experience of workaday newspaper activity or have travelled so much in the pursuit of news. Certainly no man is more highly qualified to give advice to the novice. This is what Mr. Murphy says—

It is rather difficult for one brought up in the older school of journalism to give advice to the younger generation who are seeking to make headway in their profession.

Of all the changes which have occurred in the last thirty or forty years none, I think, has been more marked than the different values placed on what is known as "news."

The old traditions and ideas on that matter have been almost entirely thrown on one side by the popular newspapers which are now the "best sellers."

Still retaining as I do, at least in some measure, a lingering affection for the old "stodgy" newspaper style of my younger days, yet I cannot fail to appreciate, almost against my will, the vast improvement which has taken place in the last few decades. In hundreds of ways it cannot be denied that the modern journal provides a superior, more varied and lighter, brighter, and more entertaining, pabulum for its readers than did the great broadsheets which served the purpose of our fathers and grandfathers.

The difference is startling. An experience of my own illustrates what I mean. In my early days, as a junior reporter on the leading morning newspaper in the Midlands, I was "marked" to report a lecture by a well-known lecturer. He was a brilliant man, who interspersed his subject with

witty sallies, amusing anecdotes and clever sayings which would have been "splashed" to-day by 90 per cent of the papers. I wrote half a column, believing it would make good reading, and it duly appeared.

When the editor saw it the next day he went white with rage. He declared that it was "utter, frivolous nonsense," and "a disgrace to a reputable journal," and he threatened with dismissal not only myself but the unhappy sub-editor who had "let it through."

Other times, other manners. Editors of 1930 would have patted me on the back for what I did, and would probably have described me as "a promising young fellow."

The news gatherer—the "all-round" journalist—has nowadays to be equipped to meet the altered circumstances. It is obvious, of course, that a youth entering upon a modern journalist's career must be endowed with a good general education. I think a public school education is the best.

It is advisable that he should know shorthand. Some of the cleverest Fleet Street descriptive writers have been expert phonographers. I have met men on jobs who have rather sneered at the shorthand writer as an inferior mechanical sort of being. Yet I have seen them, soon afterwards, appealing to him to assist them out of a real difficulty which their entire lack of knowledge of "the wingèd art" had landed them into. A man on general reporting engagements is not, in my opinion, able to cope with all emergencies unless he writes shorthand. It is important that a reporter should get accurately the basic facts of his story.

Skilfulness in attractive presentation is necessary, and the salient points should be put in the foreground.

In the face of what is demanded to-day—that records of events should be "picturesque," "piquant," "novel," "striking," and "sensational," above all, "human,"—the modern journalist must, necessarily, exercise his imagination by throwing in a dash of colour and spice, even where those things do not actually exist.

A little fanciful exaggeration may sometimes be found advisable to make more readable what might otherwise be a dull and unsensational narrative.

This advice may be stigmatized by some as unsound and improper. Well, the reply to that is that one has to face

realities, and under existing journalistic conditions the man who sticks rigidly to a bare recital of what has taken place, without introducing touches which a little imagination could supply, will probably be left in the race.

Another important thing in the armoury of a reporter is that of alertness in the getting of what are called "follow-ups." These are generally obtained through the telephone and a tactful manner, and a suave and persuasive way of putting questions to one who may be rather busy or unresponsive, may secure results unobtainable by a questioner with a less agreeable manner.

Personal interviews, on all kinds of subjects, are a necessary part of the work of up-to-date journalism. But, if you can avoid it, never flourish a notebook before your "victim." He generally seems to think that what you take down will be "given in evidence against him." Listen to what he has to say, make a mental note of it, and jot it down as soon as you have left his presence.

To be able to 'phone rapidly and clearly is of enormous value. Upwards of 90 per cent of events in England, and a large percentage of happenings on the Continent, are received by the leading newspapers and news agencies by 'phone from the scene of the occurrence.

Watch closely the material published in the popular newspapers and cultivate a "nose for news."

It frequently happens that relatively trivial incidents are the most widely read by the man—and more especially the woman—"in the street." Keep a look-out for the "unusual" things.

The announcement of whether a film star or a leading actress intends to let her hair grow or keep it shingled is often more noticed than a debate in the House of Lords or the House of Commons, however momentous—especially if the debate is dull.

Not only a clear and active brain, but a strong and healthy body, is required to meet the fierce struggle which exists in the newspaper world to-day. If a young man is not prepared to put on one side, to a very large extent, the pleasures of home and social life, the journalist's calling is not one that he should embrace.

On the other hand—apart from the work of those who

have "inside" jobs—the subs and others—there is surely no occupation which presents such a variety of interest, or affords such an opportunity of coming into contact with all classes of society—from the Throne down to the humblest citizen in the land.

### FOUR ESSENTIALS

DEFINED BY MR. LEONARD REES

Here is the advice of Mr. Leonard Rees, of the *Sunday Times*—

Four things, I venture to think, go to the making of a journalist—education, observation, the power of selection, and a sense of responsibility. A good education, with the command of a couple of modern languages, makes an excellent foundation on which the beginner can build stone by stone, as he enlarges his experience not only of literature but of the world around him. Of none is it truer than of the journalist that his education must never stand still, and that there must be no limit to his acquisition of knowledge.

I have not mentioned shorthand, which in my young days was reckoned an indispensable part of the young journalist's equipment, because it is no longer of the same importance. There are times when the capacity to take a verbatim note is very useful, but what is of more importance to-day is the power of selection in the use of your material. The first-class reporter is the editor of the material—whether a speech or an interview—which he handles, and he seizes on the part of it which is material and weighty, while he passes over that which is irrelevant or negligible.

The journalist of to-day gets a far better opportunity of personal expression than his predecessor of the last century, and he should make the best use of it by cultivating a vividness of style which should make his readers feel that he is a personal spectator of the drama which is depicted; and by constant and careful observation of the passing scene some apparently trivial incident may have instant significance to the alert mind.

And, finally, he must have always a sense of his responsibility as a member of an honourable profession. The journalist who respects himself will always put his best into his work, and will endeavour in all that he does to follow justice and truth.

## SECTION VIII

### CHAPTER XXXI

#### THE FUTURE

WHAT of the newspaper of the future? It is an interesting question, and this book would not be complete if it lacked attention. Time brings many changes, most of which are welcome because they represent progress. The newspaper is peculiarly susceptible to the changing conditions of the times. As a chronicle of new ideas and new methods it is in itself a reflection of progress. Modernity looks out from every page. The public looks to its newspaper not only to tell of the present, to describe what the world is thinking and doing, but also to read the portents of its thoughts and actions. The post-war newspaper has had much to record, and something of the spirit of the times is seen in the changes it has itself undergone.

One of the most obvious trends has been the introduction of greater artistry into journalism. Newspapers have become more decorative, if such a word may be used. Far more attention is now paid to the way in which news-matter is presented. In one sense manner has become almost as important as matter, and those who plan modern newspapers vie with one another in putting personality into the use of types and illustrations. The great idea is to produce a Bright Newspaper. In attaining this end the two most vital influences are brevity and variety.

A "story" has, indeed, to be important to secure more than half a column of space in a national daily newspaper. Most news editors work on the assumption that one cannot expect to hold the attention of an average reader for more than 500 words unless the "story" is one of unusual human interest. In ordinary news-writing it is, indeed, better to

give the reader too little rather than too much. The eye that leaves a paragraph reluctantly is more keenly interested than the eye which skips with relief to another column. From the standpoint of a newspaper maker, "reader interest"—that elusive quantity which every journalist seeks to hold—is most efficiently satisfied when it lacks "the little more" which may mean repletion. Brevity is in itself bound to lead to variety in the news columns.

### The Wide View

But newspaper variety goes even farther than that. There was never a time when newspapers took so wide a view as they do to-day. They may not see life completely, but they do at least see it whole. In the modern newspaper not only *happenings* are regarded as news. The occupations of the people, their hobbies, their Saturday afternoon and evening interests, have become news also, and claim a fair share of attention. The newspaper has become humanized. As artistry tends more and more to gild our daily lives, it was inevitable that the newspaper, too, should find it necessary to enter upon its decorative period.

There have been constant predictions in recent years of the early advent of colour-printing in newspapers, but the ground has still to be broken in this direction. There are signs, however, that this inevitable stage of newspaper evolution will soon be reached. One of the signs is the progress in colour-printing that has already been made by some of the American newspapers. It is true that the publications that have made the greatest use of it so far are Sunday newspapers, but once a start is made in this way, adoption of the process by the daily journals is bound to follow. Some of the colour supplements published in America give a good idea of what the colour-printed newspaper of ten years' hence (or even less) will be like.

It is well known that the idea of colour-printing has made

a strong appeal to more than one of the big newspaper concerns, and no little experimental work has been done. It may be remembered, for instance, that the *Daily Express* has tried printing three-colour advertisements. The value of only a small splash of colour on a news or advertisement page is realized, as is evidenced by the use of coloured edition seals by many papers.

Some journals, too, are making use of auxiliary fudge devices for printing announcements in colour. That such announcements have a striking effect cannot be doubted. Their comparatively easy printing has been made possible by the advent of the method of making small stereotyped plates for fudge boxes. It is a simple matter for any newspaper to print a small one-colour announcement in this way.

### Colour Announcements

Even on rotary newspaper presses which are equipped with only one fudge device it is possible to print such an announcement. It is done in this way: In the making-up of the page the top of the late-news column is left blank for the stop-press items. A little lower down, in the same column, two or three news paragraphs are actually made up in the forme. Then another space, about the equivalent of two fudge boxes, is left blank, and the remainder of the column is made up in the ordinary way. Thus, if the late news (in the fudge box or boxes) at the top of the column is printed in red, and the fudge box which registers on the second blank space is filled with a special house announcement, or a two-inch single column advertisement (in fudge-box stereo form), the effect is to give the latter an island position, also in red, in the centre of an ordinary column of type.

But these methods, of course, though ingenious, are simply in the nature of subterfuge, and they are far removed from orthodox colour-printing. Practical developments in the latter direction are, however, obviously due. The



British newspaper which is the first to use a three-colour process for its feature, advertisement and picture pages, will jump instantly ahead of its rivals, which will quickly find it necessary to follow suit.

### Photogravure Possibilities

Another direction in which interesting developments are likely to be seen, as far as pictorial journalism is concerned, is in connection with the greater use of photogravure. This is another process of which American newspapers have been making regular and effective use for some years past, but of which the British Press has been inclined to fight shy. The technical side of photogravure has recently undergone considerable development, and it is now capable of far wider application for practical newspaper purposes. Previously, the great difficulty was that a journal had either to be printed completely by this process or that a gravure section had subsequently to be inset. With editions running into hundreds of thousands, the latter method was obviously out of the question.

Now presses are available which will print a newspaper in the ordinary way, and print and inset a gravure section at the same time at high rotary speeds. Presses of this kind are in use in Germany. At least one weekly newspaper in England includes a photogravure section. This is the *Southend Standard*, which did commendable pioneer work in this direction when it installed gravure plant in 1914.

Pictures will undoubtedly play a very important part in the journalism of the future. In a very few years developments have taken place of which those who now regard them as commonplace had probably never dreamed. What their future extension will be we can only guess. We may be sure, however, that they will tend still further to stimulate the desire of the public for more pictures, and at the same time

to provide the technical means whereby to satisfy that demand in regard both to speed and quality of reproduction.

### A Mechanical Need

Apart from changes brought about in methods of production by the introduction of colour-printing and new technical developments of a similar nature, it is probable that the future will bring greater alterations in the interior arrangements of provincial newspapers than of those published in London. The technical innovation which is likely to represent the greatest advance, as far as the former are concerned, will be the introduction of a method so linking a mechanical type-setting machine such as the linotype and a telegraph machine that it will be possible to operate the former automatically from a distant centre.

Experiments are being made with a view to perfecting such a method, and the Americans claim that they have already done it. When it is a practical possibility in this country it will make it possible to divert news messages directly on to automatically operated linotype machines and set the copy without the necessity of putting it first through a Creed printer.

The time will probably come when the first the news editor, or chief sub-editor, will see of his general news service from the Press Association or other news agencies will be in the form of proofs from his own news composing-room. It is within the bounds of inventive possibility, too, that the otherwise redundant sub-editor will find a new job in *listening* to the news as it is being automatically transmitted in this way, and controlling the selection or the rejection of whatever is being sent out.

### Preserving Individuality

It may be urged that such an invention would result in killing the individuality of provincial newspapers and

completely stereotyping them. It would undoubtedly standardize their methods of news composing, but it would still be possible for each newspaper to give its own headlines to a story and set them in its own style. At the present time the agency news stories are mostly the same all over the country, so that mechanical setting would not make a very great change.

In addition to the time that such a method would save in provincial offices, particularly in the setting of Stock Exchange quotations, racing results, and similar matter, it would be warmly welcomed in London newspaper offices which are concerned with the duplication of their editions in other parts of the country, for it would immensely simplify the process.

### Wireless and Newspapers

It is still too early to be able to form any definite ideas as to the part wireless will play in the production of the newspaper of the future. Nearly every phase of wireless is still in its infancy, and the only certainty concerning it is that the progress that has already been made in radio science is nothing compared with what the future is likely to bring forth. So far, broadcasting, which burst forth suddenly on to a rather startled but delighted world, seems to have monopolized most of the research work, but this is now being diverted into other channels.

Up to the present newspapers have made comparatively little use of wireless as a medium for the transmission and reception of news. As far as wireless telephony is concerned, its use has been confined to long-distance interviews on the transatlantic telephone. The Post Office restrictions on the use of private transmitting stations in this country have become rather severe in recent years, and have prevented newspapers from putting in installations likely to be of practical use. More than one has applied for permission to do so, but all have met with refusal.

Radio transmissions are still subject to serious atmospheric interference, which often prevents their functioning successfully, either for telephony or picture purposes. Developments in modern science are so rapid, however, that great progress may be confidently expected in the next few years. At all events, improvements which will greatly increase the possibility of the extensions of picture transmission to the long-distance wireless systems may be looked for.

Up to the present most of the more successful transatlantic picture transmissions have been done by cable, but the time cannot be far distant when regular picture services will be operating in both directions between Britain and America, and other countries, through the ether. It may reasonably be expected, too, that the time will come when large "takes" of news-matter will be transmitted *photographically* in the same way.

### The International Newspaper

It is obvious that developments will come in the future on the lines of the international newspaper. Although in some ways there has been since the war a stressing of the spirit of nationality, there has been a far more definite trend in the direction of internationality. It is expressed in a dozen different ways, as much in the sphere of industry and commerce as in the encouragement it has received politically and diplomatically. The cheapening of travel facilities, and the coming of the aeroplane and of radio-telephony (with its special application to broadcasting), have had the effect of breaking down national barriers and dissolving national prejudices.

Broadcasting in itself is becoming an immensely powerful factor in stimulating amongst ordinary people an interest not only in the lives and habits of those in other countries, but also in serious world affairs and the problems to which

they give rise. It has, for instance, created a greater interest in foreign languages than ever existed before. This interest, in turn, has drawn attention once again to the old problem of international language. Ordinary people, who had previously given no thought to the matter, are just a little irritated because they cannot understand the foreign broadcast speech which they "pick up" so easily and hear so well. Whilst national needs in this way will always be predominant, it is probable that later generations will find in international broadcasting a strong link in the chain of world understanding and world friendship which we are now hoping to forge.

The first development may quite conceivably be an international news bulletin. What the speech medium will be it is too early to prophesy. Many people glibly predict the eventual predominance of English, but they are just as likely to be wrong as those who strenuously advocate the claims of Esperanto. There seems, at all events, to be ample justification for the view that world-language, when its day eventually dawns, as inevitably it must, will find its basis on the principle of an auxiliary language rather than of the general use of an existing national form of speech. To take any other view is to ignore a mass of expert opinion to which every country in the world contributes a heavy quota. When that day comes it will bring with it the international newspaper, with its natural accompaniment, international journalism.

### *An Advertising Problem*

It seems certain that several problems will confront the big newspapers in the near future in connection with circulation, and these are likely to have important bearings on the question of advertising, both in relation to volume and rates. It has already been suggested that developments are probable in the direction of the extension of the principle of duplicated editions of morning papers in selected centres.

One of the largest newspaper concerns in the country already possesses potential facilities for such an enterprise in the big offices which have been built for the production of new provincial evening newspapers.

The simultaneous production of a national morning newspaper in this way in several selected centres is obviously only a question of organization. It has been simplified by the perfecting of the phototelegraphy systems for the transmission of pictures, and it will be rendered still easier by the development of other media for the more rapid transmission of editorial matter, with a corresponding simplification of the mechanical process of type-setting on lines that have already been indicated.

But suppose a daily newspaper, with a 2,000,000 net sale, succeeds in doubling that figure by such an acceleration of its methods of production. With such an increase in its sales it would be justified in making a heavy increase in its advertisement rates. But would the great body of national advertisers be able to pay those increased rates, without reducing the amount of space they buy each year? A large national circulation undoubtedly has strong attractions for a certain class of advertiser, but the number in that class prepared to pay any price for newspaper publicity, especially for the purchase of large spaces, has limits.

There is little doubt that the advertiser would be expected to pay a big share of the increased cost of bringing out the quadrupled or sextupled editions which had provided him with a wider market. The nature of his response is a matter for conjecture. It is possible, on the other hand, that area editions might attract a considerable amount of area advertising.

### Publicity Progress

One direction in which considerable changes may be looked for is in the publicity methods adopted by newspapers. To give merely one instance, it may be stated that

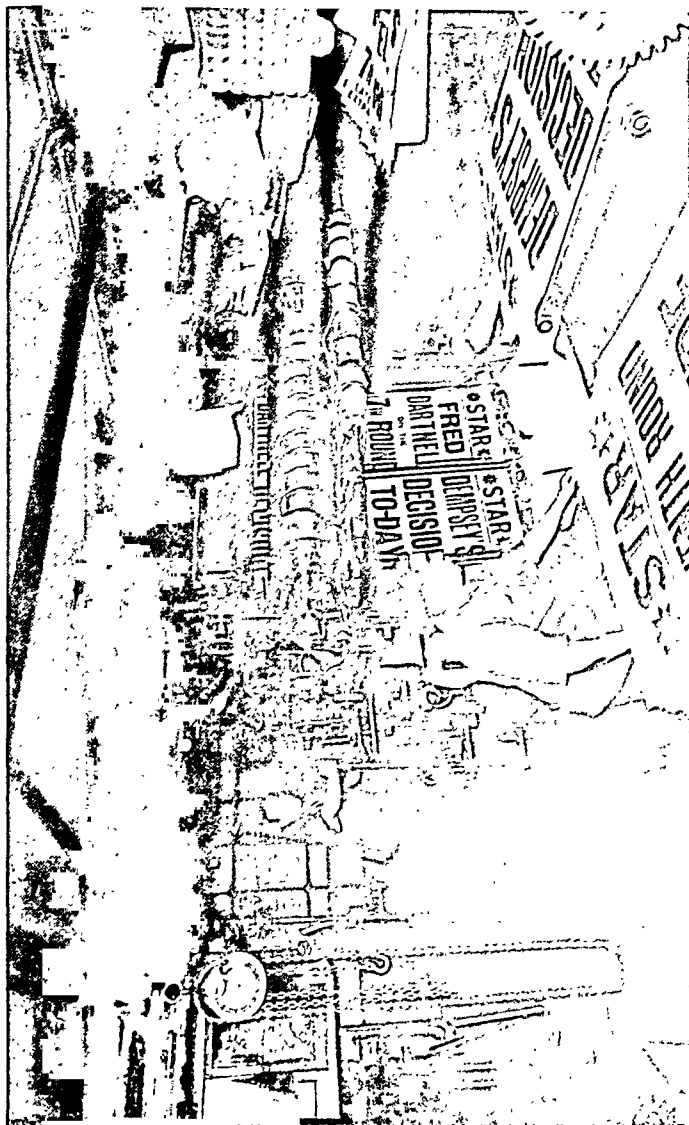
the contents bill, so long the sheet anchor of a newspaper's own daily advertising, is losing its appeal. It is, indeed, surprising that none of the big newspapers has so far found a more satisfactory medium for its news announcements. This applies especially to the evening newspapers, which generally have the pick of the news stories.

Most news happens while the world is at work. Hence the harvest which the "evenings" generally reap. In the case of the morning newspapers, too, it is doubtful if the contents bill retains its effectiveness. Insurance schemes, with the registration of the reader which they imply, tend to tie down circulation and to prevent a choice of newspaper reading from the fare offered by a contents board display. Even when a newspaper to which he does not regularly subscribe makes a special appeal through its contents bill, it is doubtful if a casual reader is induced to change when he remembers that the paper for which he is registered is waiting for him at home. It is probable, too, that he will be under the impression that it will have the same item, particularly if it is news and not a feature.

### A Televised Contents Bill?

In these days the contents bill of the evening newspaper is becoming less of a success in its special function. Its greatest drawback, too, is that it calls attention to only one item of news. In the large centres, something more efficient is called for, and it is most likely to be found in a combination of a daylight and illuminated sign, showing a succession of announcements. Such contrivances could be placed at important points, and could show the contents of six ordinary bills in succession. Out of news-selling hours they could be made to show ordinary house publicity, and thus achieve a double purpose.

There can be little doubt that people show a distinct disinclination to walk nowadays, even when it is a matter



PRINTING THE CONTENTS BILLS ON A ROTARY BILL-PRINTING MACHINE





HANDLING THE LATE-NEWS

A Late-News Composing Department. Note the telegraphic instruments (on the right) by which race results and other important items are received direct.

of covering a very short distance. Trams, tubes, and motor omnibuses claim increasing popularity. These people are not reached by contents bills. Will the future, always so productive of scientific marvels, give the newspapers a medium for reaching them—perhaps a miniature television screen operated from the office itself and giving visual announcements simultaneously in several hundreds of mobile places?

### A Radio Rival?

Consideration of the future of the newspaper has led some people to doubt whether it has any future at all. When broadcasting, for instance, was introduced, and the public first began to realize what its possibilities might be, there were those who predicted the gradual obsolescence of the printed newspaper, and its replacement by a broadcast newspaper, in which the living voice would take the place of type. One can read articles on these lines in the early issues of the wireless journals and contemporary magazines. In the first flush of new enthusiasms perspective is liable to suffer distortion.

Broadcasting has made great advances since that time—its progress in so short a period is, in fact, remarkable—but so far the newspaper shows no signs of suffering even partial eclipse. On the contrary, newspapers are increasing in influence and importance. Remarkable increases in circulation are constantly reported, and in every way the newspaper is strengthening its position as a social and economic force.

It is true that so far as Britain is concerned certain restrictions are placed upon the broadcasting of news and descriptive reports of events, and that these serve to prevent, to some extent, developments in this direction. On the other hand, it must be noted that in European centres where such restrictions do not apply the wireless "newspaper" shows little sign of rapid development and no sign

of overshadowing the printed journal. French and Belgian broadcasting stations have their *journal parle*, but this does not cause much excitement in their national Press.

### Not a Novelty

The dissemination of news by the spoken word is, as a matter of fact, no novelty, even when it is done through the medium of the wireless "news bulletin." In the days before the invention of printing the sermon in the village church was, in part, a form of news bulletin, in which each small community heard, often very belatedly and inaccurately, of the happenings in the outside world. Before scientific progress had made broadcasting possible, the telephone news bulletin was available in some continental cities. In Budapest, for instance, telephone subscribers, by paying an extra fee, could listen at stated hours of the day to news bulletins which covered all sorts of interests. At night, too, they could be switched over to a concert or to the Opera House. It was, indeed, broadcasting over the telephone, and it had other variations elsewhere.

The spoken word has a strictly limited appeal, and the success of a "radio newspaper" presupposes many important conditions. In the first place, it must be assumed that people have unlimited time in which to listen. In the time given up to an ordinary broadcast talk an average mind can take in the main contents of a complete newspaper. Secondly, it must be assumed that everyone (or, at least, the greater proportion of listeners) would be able to listen *at the same time* to the general news, and there would be considerable difficulty in determining the times for broadcasting the more special classes of information. However, it does not follow that there will not be a considerable extension of the broadcast bulletin on lines which may call for the development of a new journalistic technique to suit the special conditions of news broadcasting. At the same time there

seems little ground for fear that such an extension will interfere in any way with the legitimate function of the newspaper.

### What of the Screen ?

What of the screen, with its "news reels," recently reinforced with a further spice of novelty in the form of "talkie" versions? Will the cinema ever compete seriously with the newspaper? No more seriously, probably, than the ordinary news film has already competed with the picture paper.

Here, too, developments can obviously be expected, but, as with broadcasting, the screen has definite limitations, imposed by its own special function rather than by any defects in its technical equipment. Both broadcasting and the cinema are *able* to compete with the newspaper, but will the public want them to do so? This seems to be the crux of the matter. The main function of the cinema is to amuse, and as soon as it seriously embarks on other activities—except, perhaps, as an adjunct to education—it will incur the danger of defeating its own purpose.

Of the newspaper itself, its contents and its outlook—dare one say its soul?—many changes may be expected. To visualize the newspaper of the future one has to build up a mental picture of the community of the years to come, with its new culture, its new economic and political outlook, and its new ways of amusing itself. It will probably take serious things more seriously than does our own generation, but that will not prevent it taking the lighter view of life and matters when it feels the mood to fit the occasion. There is no phase of active life more adaptable than journalism, and whatever the need it will be filled. Could any magician's wand give us a more delightful experience than the opportunity of reading a newspaper of A.D. 2000?



## SECTION IX

# APPENDICES

### APPENDIX I: A GLOSSARY OF NEWSPAPER TERMS (WITH ILLUSTRATIVE PHRASES)

**Ad. Rule.** Rule used to cut off or divide advertisement or other set matter.

**Banner.** A large headline across the top of a page or part of it. Also known as Streamer.

**Black.** Newspaper term for a carbon copy of a page of manuscript. (Put in a "black" = to make a duplicate.)

**Brief.** Small news item of only a few lines.

**Broken Letter.** Piece of damaged type.

**Bumping.** Raising the shadows of a half-tone plate by underlaying with thicknesses of paper.

**C.N.** Abbreviation for Central News, a news agency.

**Casting Box.** Part of the equipment in a stereotyping foundry in which plates are cast.

**Casting Off.** Estimating the length of a "take" or "takes" of copy before setting.

**Catch-line.** Line of type placed at the top of matter to identify it.

**Chase.** Metal frame in which a page of type is made up. Also called a forme when actually filled with type.

**Chill.** Blemish in a stereotyped plate due to cold metal.

**Clicker.** Charge-hand in small department of a composing room.

**Clump.** Column-wide piece of metal placed at the foot of each column previous to its locking up in the forme.

**Comp.** Abbreviation for "compositor," a printing office worker who is mainly concerned with the setting of type.

**Copy Paper.** Manuscript paper used by reporters and other newspaper workers.

**Cub.** An American term for a junior reporter. Corresponds to the Australian "cadet."

**Cut.** Deletion from matter, either in "copy" or type. ("Cut that story by three sticks.")

**Delete.** Take out. Indicated on proofs by the use of the letter *d* with a looped top.

**Dirty Proof.** A proof in which the reader has had to make many corrections. A proof with few corrections is said to be "clean."

**Dope.** Newspaper term for propaganda matter.

**Dropped Letter.** Large initial letter used to start a news feature story for purposes of typographical embellishment only.

**Flong.** Piece of papier mâché, specially prepared, the size of a forme, in which, under pressure, the impression of a page of type is made for the casting of a stereotype plate.

**Forme.** See CHASE.

**Font.** A complete range of type of one style or face, containing the alphabet in capitals and small letters, figures, punctuation marks, etc.

**Fudge-box.** Attachment for insertion of late news on rotary press.

**Galley.** Receptacle in which type is placed for proof-pulling purposes before being actually put on the machine.

**Half Measure.** Type set to half-column width.

**Lead** (*pronounced "lead"*). Term applied to an important (or leading) news story. ("That train collision will make a good lead for the first edition.")

**Lead** (*pronounced "led"*). Thin piece of lead placed between lines of type to space the matter out. ("Lead the first six lines of every news paragraph.") "White" is sometimes used instead of "lead." ("White out—or put a few whites in—that heading.")

**Literal.** Error in setting type due to the use of a wrong letter. ("There are a few 'literals' in this proof.")

**Lower Case.** The small letters of a fount of type.

**Marked.** A reporter is said to be "marked" for an engagement when his name is entered beside it in the office diary. ("I am 'marked' to cover the Wireless Exhibition to-day.")

**Open.** A term used to denote a certain space has not been filled. ("The overseer says we are still two columns 'open.'")

**Out.** Text accidentally left out by an operator in setting copy. The proof is marked: "Out. See Copy." (Abbreviated "C. Copy.")

**Over-matter.** Matter set but not used in the filling of the paper. ("A column of that 'over-matter' can be used to-morrow.")

**Over-run.** An omission or alteration in set matter which makes it necessary for the lino operator to reset a number of lines. ("If these words are added they will over-run.")

**Over-set.** A term used to denote that more matter has been set in type than would be required normally to fill the paper. ("We are six columns 'over-set' to-night.")

**P.A.** Abbreviation for Press Association.

**Page Proof.** Proof of a completely made-up page of type for final approval.

**Plate.** Semi-cylindrical metal cast from a flong for attachment to rotary press.

**Pull.** A proof of set matter. ("I should like a 'pull' of my article.")

**Quad.** Piece of metal, lower than type, used for filling spaces between type.

**Random.** Shelf on which type is placed, generally on galleys.

**Redact.** A term sometimes used in place of "sub-edit." From French *redacteur*.

**Release.** O.K. for publication. ("Tell the overseer to release the Brown-Jones wedding.")

**Re-punch.** Repetition of a Creed message by the sending station, mostly for the correction of an error in transmission.

**Reuter.** Name of a news agency.

**Revise.** Proof of set matter "pulled" subsequent to the re-setting of corrected lines by the operator.

**Re-write.** An adaptation or embellishment of a news story. ("We must have a re-write of that Doncaster story for the second edition.")

**Run.** Term to denote duration of printing an edition. ("There is only a short 'run' on the first edition.")

**Run On.** Phrase used to denote that matter is not to be "broken up" (or divided) into paragraphs. Marked on copy or proofs "R.O."

**Scoop.** Newspaper term to denote an important exclusive news story or news photograph. ("He was a reporter who secured many big 'scoops' for his paper.")

**Screen.** Given number of dots to a square inch of a process block which make up the light and shade of the picture.

**Side Sticks and Foot Sticks.** Pieces of wedge-shaped iron used to tighten type enclosed in a chase.

**Sink.** A blemish, in the shape of a small depression, in a printing plate.

**Slug.** Line of type set on a linotype machine or other mechanical typesetter.

**Splash.** A news story to which special prominence is given. Also, sudden squirting of molten metal from a linotype or other similar machine.

**Stick.** A term in common use as a standard of measurement. Nominally about 20 lines of brevier type. So called from the composing stick used by the old-time compositor.

**Stone.** The imposing surface on which pages are made up.

**Stone Hand.** Worker who works at the stone, arranging type in page form.

**Story.** Term commonly used to describe a report or account of any kind of event.

**Streamer.** See BANNER.

**Take.** A portion of "copy" handed out to a lino operator or a compositor.

**The Morgue.** Term used to describe collection of obituary notices of well-known people kept ready for use in every newspaper office.

**To Keep "Up."** A term meaning to capitalize. ("Keep 'up' Party" = set the word Party with an initial capital.)

**Two-line Letter.** An initial letter, twice the size of the body matter.

**Upper Case.** The capital letters of a fount of type.



## APPENDIX II: PRESS ABBREVIATIONS IN COMMON USE

about, abt  
 according, acc.  
 account, acct  
 advertisement, ad. or advt.  
 affectionate, aff.  
 affectionately, affly  
 afternoon, aftn  
 again, agn  
 against, agst  
 America, Amer.  
 among, amg  
 amount, amt  
 -ance, -ce  
 because, bec  
 been, bn  
 between, btwn  
 brought, brot  
 caught, cat  
 chairman, chn  
 circumstance, circe  
 committee, come  
 could, cd  
 difference, difce  
 different, dift  
 difficult, difelt  
 difficulty, difelty  
 -ence, -ce  
 England, -ish, Eng.  
 especially, esp.  
 evening, evg  
 -ever, -r.  
 every, evy  
 excellent, exc.  
 extraordinary, xtry  
 faithfully, fiv  
 for, f.  
 Friday, Fri.  
 from, fm  
 further, furr  
 general, genl  
 generally, geny  
 good, gd  
 government, govt  
 great, gt  
 had, hd  
 have, h.  
 importance, impce  
 important, imp  
 -ing, -g.  
 -ion, -n.

large, lge.  
 manuscript, -s, MS., MSS.  
 meeting, mtg  
 -ment, -mt.  
 might, mt  
 Monday, Mon.  
 morning, mg  
 notwithstanding, notw  
 objection, objn  
 occasion, occn  
 o'clock, o'clock.  
 of, o.  
 opinion, opn  
 opportunity, oppy  
 other, or  
 ought, ot  
 page, -s, p., pp.  
 particular, part  
 popular, pop.  
 query, qy  
 question, qn  
 quotation, quot.  
 said, sd.  
 Saturday, Sat.  
 several, sev<sup>l</sup>  
 shall, sh.  
 should, shd  
 -sion, -n.  
 specially, spec.  
 Sunday, Sun.  
 that, t.  
 the, /.  
 their, there, thr  
 though, tho.  
 through, thro.  
 Thursday, Thurs.  
 -tion, -n.  
 together, togr  
 truly, ty  
 Tuesday, Tues.  
 vary, v. or vy  
 very good, v.g.  
 Wednesday, Wed.  
 whether, whr  
 which, wh.  
 with, w.  
 without, wt  
 would, wd  
 yesterday, yesty or y'day.  
 you, y; your, yr; yours, yrs

# APPENDIX III: TYPOGRAPHY: THE POINT SYSTEM WITH THE NAMES OF TYPES FORMERLY USED

Pearl . . . . .	5 point.
Nonpareil . . . . .	6 "
Minion. . . . .	7 "
Brevier . . . . .	8 "
Bourgeois . . . . .	9 "
Long Primer . . . . .	10 "
Small Pica . . . . .	11 "
Pica. . . . .	12 "
English. . . . .	14 "
Great Primer . . . . .	18 "
2-line Pica. . . . .	24 "



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